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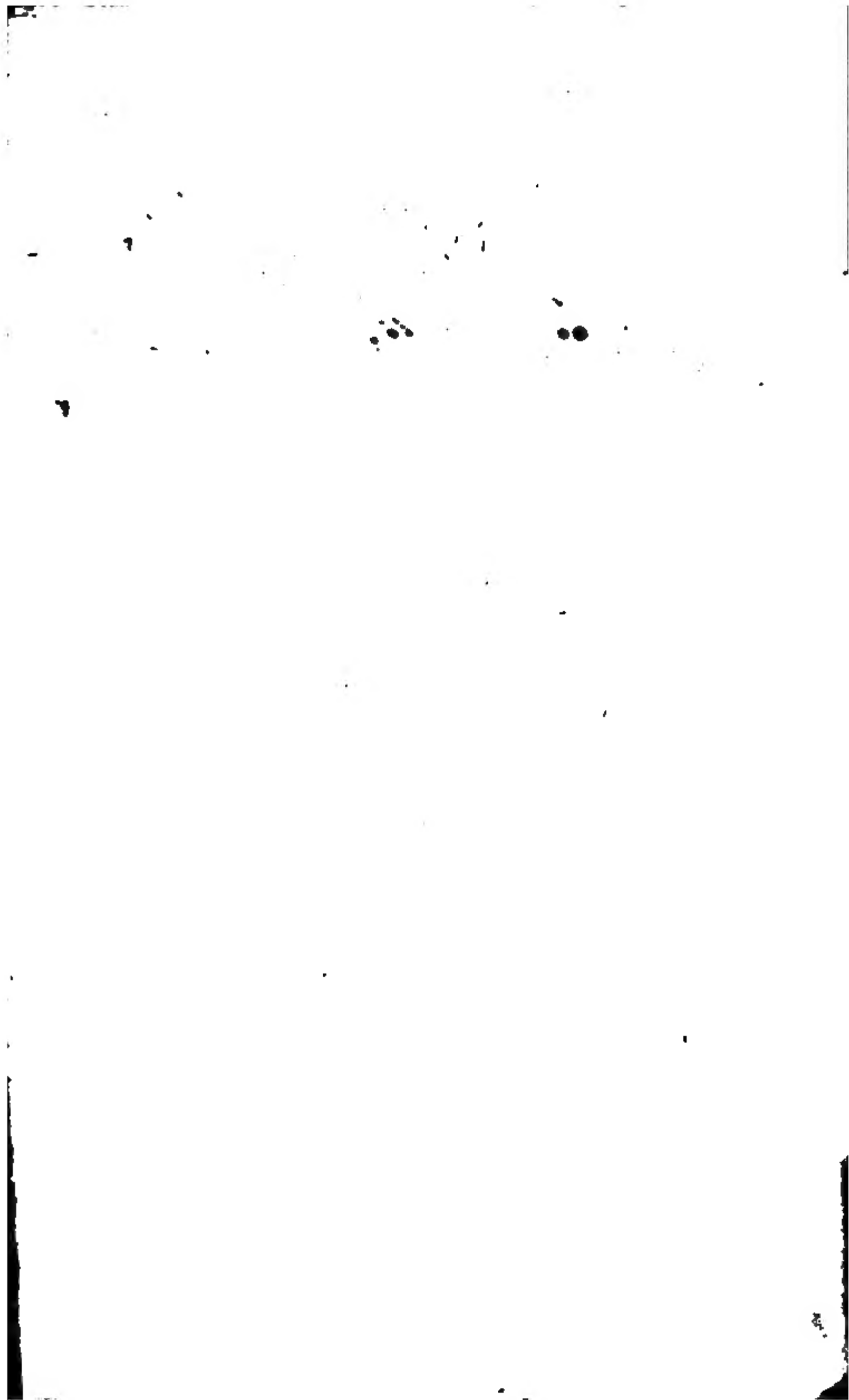
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THE

L I F E

OF

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE,

EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

WITH A

**PRELIMINARY VIEW OF THE FRENCH
REVOLUTION.**

Scott, Sir Walter.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY," &c.

— Sed non in Cesare tantum
Nomen erat, nec fama ducis; sed nescia virtus
Stare loco: solusque pudor non vincere bello;
Acer et indomitus: quo spes quoque ira vocasset.
Ferre manum, et nunquam temerando parcere ferro;
Successus urgere suos; instare favori
Numinis; impellens quicquid sibi summa petenti
Obstaret; gaudensque viam fecisse ruina.

LUCANI *Pharsalia*, Lib. 1.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Philadelphia:

CAREY, LEA & CAREY.—CHESNUT-STREET.

STEREOTYPED BY J. HOWE.

.....

1827.

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THE extent and purpose of this work, have, in the course of its progress, gradually but essentially changed from what the author originally proposed. It was at first intended merely as a brief and popular abstract of the most wonderful man, and the most extraordinary events of the last thirty years—in short, to emulate the concise yet most interesting history of the great British Admiral, by the Poet-Laureate of Britain. The author was partly induced to undertake the task, by having formerly drawn up for a periodical work, (*The Edinburgh Annual Register*,) the history of the two great campaigns of 1814 and 1815;* and three volumes was the compass assigned to the proposed work. An introductory volume, giving a general account of the Rise and Progress of the Revolution, was thought necessary; and the single volume, on a theme of such extent, soon swelled into two.

As the author composed under an anonymous title, he could neither seek nor expect information from those who had been actively engaged in the changeful scenes which he was attempting to record; nor was his object more ambitious than that of compressing and arranging such information as the ordinary authorities afforded. Circumstances, however, unconnected with the undertaking, induced him to lay aside an *incognito*, any further attempt to preserve which must have been considered as affectation; and since his having done so, he has been favoured with access to some valuable materials, most of which have now, for the first time, seen the light. For these he refers to the Appendix, where the reader will find several articles of novelty and interest. Though not at liberty in every case to mention the quarter from which his information

* Several extracts from these Annals have been blended with the present account of the same events.

has been derived, the author has been careful to rely upon none which did not come from sufficient authority. He has neither grubbed for anecdotes in the libels and private scandal of the time, nor has he solicited information from individuals who could not be impartial witnesses in the facts to which they gave evidence. Yet the various public documents and private information which he has received, have materially enlarged his stock of materials, and increased the whole work to more than twice the size originally intended.

On the execution of his task, it becomes the author to be silent. He is aware it must exhibit many faults; but he claims credit for having brought to the undertaking a mind disposed to do his subject as impartial justice as his judgment could supply. He will be found no enemy to the person of Napoleon. The term of hostility is ended when the battle has been won, and the foe exists no longer. His splendid personal qualities—his great military actions and political services to France, will not, it is hoped, be found lessened in the narrative. Unhappily, the author's task involved a duty of another kind, the discharge of which is due to France, to Britain, to Europe, and to the world. If the general system of Napoleon has rested upon force or fraud, it is neither the greatness of his talents, nor the success of his undertakings, that ought to stifle the voice or dazzle the eyes of him who adventures to be his historian. The reasons, however, are carefully summed up where the author has presumed to express a favourable or unfavourable opinion of the distinguished person of whom these volumes treat; so that each reader may judge of their validity for himself.

The name, by an original error of the press, which proceeded too far before it was discovered, has been printed with a *u*, Buonaparte instead of Bonaparte. Both spellings were indifferently adopted in the family; but Napoleon always used the last, and had an unquestioned right to choose the orthography which he preferred.

EDINBURGH, 7th June, 1827.

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LIFE

OF

NAPOLÉON BUONAPARTE.

CHAPTER I.

VIEW OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

Review of the State of Europe after the Peace of Versailles.—England—France—Spain—Prussia.—Imprudent Innovations of the Emperor Joseph.—Disturbances in his Dominions.—Russia.—France—Her ancient System of Monarchy—how organized—Causes of its Decay—Decay of the Nobility as a body—The new Nobles—The Country Nobles—The Nobles of the highest Order.—The Church—The higher Orders of the Clergy—The lower Orders—The Commons—Their increase in Power and Importance—Their Claims opposed to those of the Privileged Classes.

WHEN we look back on past events, however important, it is difficult to recall the precise sensations with which we viewed them in their progress, and to recollect the fears, hopes, doubts, and difficulties, for which Time and the course of Fortune have formed a termination, so different probably from that which we had anticipated. When the rush of the inundation was before our eyes, and in our ears, we were scarce able to remember the state of things before its rage commenced, and when, subsequently, the deluge has subsided within the natural limits of the stream, it is still more difficult to recollect with precision the terrors it inspired when at its height. That which is present possesses such power over our senses and our imagination, that it requires no common effort to recall those sensations which expired with preceding events. Yet, to do this is the peculiar province of history, which will be written and read in vain, unless it can connect with its details an accurate idea of the impression which these produced on men's minds while they were yet in their transit. It is with this view that we attempt to resume the history of France and of Europe, at the conclusion of the American war, a period now only remembered by the more advanced part of the present generation.

The peace concluded at Versailles in 1783, was reasonably supposed to augur a long repose to Europe. The high and emulous tone assumed in former times by the rival nations, had been lowered and tamed by recent circumstances. England, under the guidance of a weak, at least a most unlucky administration, had purchased peace at the expense of her North American Empire, and the resignation of supremacy over her colonies; a loss great in itself, but exaggerated in the eyes of the nation, by the rending asunder of the ties of common descent, and exclusive commercial intercourse, and by a sense of the wars waged, and expenses encountered for the protection and advancement of the fair empire which England found herself obliged to surrender. The lustre of the British arms, so brilliant at the Peace of Fontenoy, had been tarnished, if not extinguished. In spite of the gallant defence of Gibraltar, the general result of the war on land had been unfavourable to her military reputation; and notwithstanding the opportune and splendid victories of Red-

ney, the coasts of Britain had been insulted, and her fleets compelled to retire into port, while those of her combined enemies rode masters of the Channel. The spirit of the country also had been lowered, by the unequal contest which had been sustained, and by the sense that her naval superiority was an object of invidious hatred to united Europe. This had been lately made manifest, by the armed alliance of the northern nations, which, though termed a neutrality, was, in fact, a league made to abate the pretensions of England to maritime supremacy. There are to be added, to these disheartening and depressing circumstances, the decay of commerce during the long course of hostilities, with the want of credit and depression of the price of land, which are the usual consequences of a transition from war to peace, ere capital has regained its natural channel. All these things being considered, it appeared the manifest interest of England to husband her exhausted resources, and recruit her diminished wealth, by cultivating peace and tranquillity for a long course of time. William Pitt, never more distinguished than in his financial operations, was engaged in new-modelling the revenue of the country, and adding to the return of the taxes, while he diminished their pressure. It could scarcely be supposed that any object of national ambition would have been permitted to disturb him in a task so necessary.

Neither had France, the natural rival of England, come off from the contest in such circumstances of triumph and advantage, as were likely to encourage her to a speedy renewal of the struggle. It is true, she had seen and contributed to the humiliation of her ancient enemy, but she had paid dearly for the gratification of her revenge, as nations and individuals are wont to do. Her finances, tampered with by successive sets of ministers, who looked no farther than to temporary expedients for carrying on the necessary expenses of government, now presented an alarming prospect; and it seemed as if the wildest and most enterprising ministers would hardly have dared, in their most sanguine moments, to have recommended either war itself, or any measures of which war might be the consequence.

Spain was in a like state of exhaustion. She had been hurried into the alliance against England, partly by the consequences of the family alliance betwixt her Bourbons and those of France, but still more by the eager and engrossing desire to possess herself once more of Gibraltar. The Castilian pride, long galled by beholding this important fortress in the hands of heretics and foreigners, highly applauded the war, which gave a chance of its recovery, and seconded, with all the power of the kingdom, the gigantic efforts made for that purpose. All these immense preparations, with the most formidable means of attack ever used on such an occasion, had totally failed, and the kingdom of Spain remained at once stunned and mortified by the failure, and broken down by the expenses of so huge an undertaking. An attack upon Algiers, in 1784-5, tended to exhaust the remains of her military ardour. Spain, therefore, relapsed into inactivity and repose, dispirited by the miscarriage of her favourite scheme, and possessing neither the means nor the audacity necessary to meditate its speedy renewal.

Neither were the sovereigns of the late belligerent powers of that ambitious and active character which was likely to drag the kingdoms which they swayed into the renewal of hostilities. The classic eye of the historian Gibbon saw Arcadius and Honorius, the weakest and most indolent of the Roman Emperors, slumbering upon the thrones of the House of Bourbon; and the just and loyal character of George III. precluded any effort on his part to undermine the peace which he signed unwillingly, or to attempt the resumption of those rights which he had formerly, though reluctantly, surrendered. His expression to the ambassador of the United States, was a trait of character never to be omitted or forgotten;—"I have been the last man in my dominions to accede

to this peace, which separates America from my kingdoms—I will be the first man, now it is made, to resist any attempt to infringe it.”

The acute historian whom we have already quoted seems to have apprehended, in the character and ambition of the northern potentates, those causes of disturbance which were not to be found in the western part of the European Republic. But Catharine, the Semiramis of the north, had her views of extensive dominion chiefly turned towards her eastern and southern frontier, and the finances of her immense, but comparatively poor and unpeopled empire, were burthened with the expenses of a luxurious court, requiring at once to be gratified with the splendour of Asia and the refinements of Europe. The strength of her empire also, though immense, was unwieldy, and the empire had not been uniformly fortunate in its wars with the more prompt, though less numerous armies of the King of Prussia, her neighbour. Thus Russia, no less than other powers in Europe, seemed more desirous of reposing her gigantic strength, than of adventuring upon new and hazardous conquests. Even her views upon Turkey, which circumstances seemed to render more flattering than ever, she was contented to resign, in 1784, when only half accomplished; a pledge, not only that her thoughts were sincerely bent upon peace, but that she felt the necessity of resisting even the most tempting opportunities for resuming the course of victory which she had, four years before, pursued so successfully.

Frederick of Prussia himself, who had been so long, by dint of genius and talent, the animating soul of the political intrigues in Europe, had run too many risks, in the course of his adventurous and eventful reign, to be desirous of encountering new hazards in the extremity of life. His empire, extended as it was, from the shores of the Baltic to the frontiers of Holland, consisted of various detached portions, which it required the aid of time to consolidate into a single kingdom. And, accustomed to study the signs of the times, it could not have escaped Frederick, that sentiments and feelings were afloat, connected with, and fostered by, the spirit of unlimited investigation, which he himself had termed philosophy, such as might soon call upon the sovereigns to arm in a common cause, and ought to prevent them, in the meanwhile, from wasting their strength in mutual struggles, and giving advantage to a common enemy.

If such anticipations occupied and agitated the last years of Frederick's life, they had not the same effect upon the Emperor Joseph II., who, without the same clear-eyed precision of judgment, endeavoured to tread in the steps of the King of Prussia, as a reformer, and as a conqueror. It would be unjust to deny to this prince the praise of considerable talents, and inclination to employ them for the good of the country which he ruled. But it frequently happens, that the talents, and even the virtues of sovereigns, exercised without respect to time and circumstances, become the misfortune of their government. It is particularly the lot of princes, endowed with such personal advantages, to be confident in their own abilities, and, unless educated in the severe school of adversity, to prefer favourites, who assent to and repeat their opinions, to independent counsellors, whose experience might correct their own hasty conclusions. And thus, although the personal merits of Joseph II. were in every respect acknowledged, his talents in a great measure recognized, and his patriotic intentions scarcely disputable, it fell to his lot, during the period we treat of, to excite more apprehension and discontent among his subjects, than had he been a prince content to rule by a minister, and wear out an indolent life in the forms and pleasures of a court. Accordingly, the Emperor, in many of his schemes of reform, too hastily adopted, or at least too incautiously and peremptorily executed, had the misfortune to introduce fearful commotions among the people, whose situation he meant to ameliorate, while in his external relations he rendered Austria the quarter from which a breach of Eu-

ropean peace was most to be apprehended. It seemed, indeed, as if the Emperor had contrived to reconcile his philosophical professions with the exercise of the most selfish policy towards the United Provinces, both in opening the Scheldt, and in dismantling the barrier towns, which had been placed in their hands as a defence against the power of France. By the first of these measures the Emperor gained nothing but the paltry sum of money for which he sold his pretensions, and the shame of having shown himself ungrateful for the important services which the United Provinces had rendered to his ancestors. But the dismantling of the Dutch barrier was subsequently attended by circumstances alike calamitous to Austria, and to the whole continent of Europe.

In another respect, the reforms carried through by Joseph II. tended to prepare the public mind for future innovations, made with a ruder hand, and upon a much larger scale. The suppression of the religious orders, and the appropriation of their revenues to the general purposes of government, had in it something to flatter the feelings of those of the reformed religion; but, in a moral point of view, the seizing upon the property of any private individual, or public body, is an invasion of the most sacred principles of public justice, and such spoliation cannot be vindicated by urgent circumstances of state-necessity, or any plausible pretext of state-advantage whatsoever, since no necessity can vindicate what is in itself unjust, and no public advantage can compensate a breach of public faith. Joseph was also the first Catholic sovereign who broke through the solemn degree of reverence attached by that religion to the person of the Sovereign Pontiff. The Pope's fruitless and humiliating visit to Vienna furnished the shadow of a precedent for the conduct of Napoleon to Pius VII.

Another and yet less justifiable cause of innovation, placed in peril, and left in doubt and discontent, some of the fairest provinces of the Austrian dominions, and those which the wisest of their princes had governed with peculiar tenderness and moderation. The Austrian Netherlands had been in a literal sense dismantled and left open to the first invader, by the demolition of the barrier fortresses; and it seems to have been the systematic purpose of the Emperor to eradicate and destroy that love and regard for their prince and his government, which in time of need proves the most effectual moral substitute for moats and ramparts. The history of the house of Burgundy bore witness on every page to the love of the Flemings for liberty, and the jealousy with which they have from the earliest ages watched the privileges they had obtained from their princes. Yet in that country, and amongst these people, Joseph carried on his measures of innovation with a hand so unsparing, as if he meant to bring the question of liberty or arbitrary power to a very brief and military decision betwixt him and his subjects.

His alterations were not in Flanders, as elsewhere, confined to the ecclesiastical state alone, although such innovations were peculiarly offensive to a people rigidly Catholic, but were extended through the most important parts of the civil government. Changes in the courts of justice were threatened—the Great Seal, which had hitherto remained with the Chancellor of the States, was transferred to the Imperial Minister—a Council of State, composed of Commissioners nominated by the Emperor, was appointed to discharge the duties, hitherto intrusted to a Standing Committee of the States of Brabant—their Universities were altered and new-modelled—and their magistrates subjected to arbitrary arrests and sent to Vienna, instead of being tried in their own country and by their own laws. The Flemish people beheld these innovations with the sentiments natural to freemen, and not a little stimulated certainly by the scenes which had lately passed in North America, where, under circumstances of far less provocation, a large empire had emancipated itself

from the mother country. The States remonstrated loudly, and refused submission to the decrees which encroached on their constitutional liberties, and at length arrayed a military force in support of their patriotic opposition.

Joseph, who at the same time he thus wantonly provoked the States and people of Flanders, had been seduced by Russia to join her ambitious plan upon Turkey, bent apparently before the storm he had excited, and for a time yielded to accommodation with his subjects of Flanders, renounced the most obnoxious of his new measures, and confirmed the privileges of the nation at what was called the Joyous Entry. But this spirit of conciliation was only assumed for the purpose of deception; for so soon as he had assembled in Flanders what was deemed a sufficient armed force to sustain his despotic purposes, the Emperor threw off the mask, and, by the most violent acts of military force, endeavoured to overthrow the constitution he had agreed to observe, and to enforce the arbitrary measures which he had pretended to abandon. For a brief period of two years, Flanders remained in a state of suppressed, but deeply-founded and wide-extended discontent, watching for a moment favourable to freedom and to vengeance. It proved an ample storehouse of combustibles, prompt to catch fire, as the flame now arising in France began to expand itself; nor can it be doubted, that the condition of the Flemish provinces, whether considered in a military or in a political light, was one of the principal causes of the subsequent success of the French republican arms. Joseph himself, broken-hearted and dispirited, died in the very beginning of the troubles he had wantonly provoked. Desirous of fame as a legislator and a warrior, and certainly born with talents to acquire it, he left his arms dishonoured by the successes of the despised Turks, and his fair dominions of the Netherlands and of Hungary upon the very eve of insurrection. A lampoon, written upon the hospital for lunatics at Vienna, might be said to be no unjust epitaph for a monarch, once so hopeful and so beloved—*Josephus ubique Secundus—hic Primus*.

These Flemish disturbances might be regarded as symptoms of the new opinions which were tacitly gaining ground in Europe, and which preceded the grand explosion, as slight shocks of an earthquake usually announce the approach of its general convulsion. The like may be said of the short-lived Dutch Revolution of 1787, in which the ancient faction of Louvestein, under the encouragement of France, for a time completely triumphed over that of the Stadtholder, deposed him from his hereditary command of Captain-General of the Army of the States, and reduced, or endeavoured to reduce, the Confederation of the United States to a pure democracy. This was also a strong sign of the times; for although totally opposite to the inclination of the majority of the States-General, of the equestrian body, of the landed proprietors, nay, of the very populace, most of whom were from habit and principle attached to the House of Orange, the burghers of the large towns drove on the work of revolution with such warmth of zeal and promptitude of action, as showed a great part of the middling classes to be deeply tinctured with the desire of gaining further liberty, and a larger share in the legislation and administration of the country, than pertained to them under the old oligarchical constitution.

The revolutionary government, in the Dutch provinces, did not, however, conduct their affairs with prudence. Without waiting to organize their own force, or weaken that of the enemy—without obtaining the necessary countenance and protection of France, or co-operating with the malcontents in the Austrian Netherlands, they gave, by arresting the Princess of Orange (sister of the King of Prussia), an opportunity of foreign interference, of which that prince failed not to avail himself. His armies poured into the Netherlands, commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, and with little difficulty

possessed themselves of Utrecht, Amsterdam, and the other cities which constituted the strength of the Louvestein or republican faction. The King then replaced the House of Orange in all its power, privileges, and functions. The conduct of the Dutch republicans during their brief hour of authority had been neither so moderate nor so popular as to make their sudden and almost unresisting fall a matter of general regret. On the contrary, it was considered as a probable pledge of the continuance of peace in Europe, especially as France, busied with her own affairs, declined interference in those of the United States.

The intrigues of Russia had, in accomplishment of the ambitious schemes of Catharine, lighted up war with Sweden, as well as with Turkey; but in both cases hostilities were commenced upon the old plan of fighting one or two battles, and wresting a fortress or a province from a neighbouring state; and it seems likely, that the intervention of France and England, equally interested in preserving the balance of power, might have ended these troubles, but for the progress of that great and hitherto unheard-of course of events, which prepared, carried on, and matured, the FRENCH REVOLUTION.

It is necessary, for the execution of our plan, that we should review this period of history, the most important, perhaps, during its currency, and in its consequences, which the annals of mankind afford; and although the very title is sufficient to awaken in most bosoms either horror or admiration, yet, neither insensible of the blessings of national liberty, nor of those which flow from the protection of just laws, and a moderate but firm executive government, we may perhaps be enabled to trace its events with the candour of one, who, looking back on past scenes, feels divested of the keen and angry spirit with which, in common with his contemporaries, he may have judged them while they were yet in progress.

We have shortly reviewed the state of Europe in general, which we have seen to be either pacific, or disturbed by troubles of no long duration; but it was in France that a thousand circumstances, some arising out of the general history of the world, some peculiar to that country herself, mingled, like the ingredients in the witches' cauldron, to produce in succession many a formidable but passing apparition, until concluded by the stern Vision of absolute and military power, as those in the drama are introduced by that of the Armed Head.

The first and most effective cause of the Revolution, was the change which had taken place in the feelings of the French towards their government, and the monarch who was its head. The devoted loyalty of the people to their king had been for several ages the most marked characteristic of the nation; it was their honour in their own eyes, and matter of contempt and ridicule in those of the English, because it seemed in its excess to swallow up all ideas of patriotism. That very excess of loyalty, however, was founded not on a servile, but upon a generous principle. France is ambitious, fond of military glory, and willingly identifies herself with the fame acquired by her soldiers. Down to the reign of Louis XV., the French monarch was, in the eyes of his subjects, a general, and the whole people an army. An army must be under severe discipline, and a general must possess absolute power; but the soldier feels no degradation from the restraint which is necessary to his profession, and without which he cannot be led to conquest.

Every true Frenchman, therefore, submitted, without scruple, to that abridgement of personal liberty which appeared necessary to render the monarch great, and France victorious. The king, according to this system, was regarded less as an individual than as the representative of the concentrated honour of the kingdom; and in this sentiment, however extravagant and Quixotic, there mingled much that was generous, patriotic, and disinterested. The same feeling was awakened, after all the changes of the Revolution, by the wonderful suc-

cesses of the individual of whom the future volumes are to treat, and who transferred in many instances to his own person, by deeds almost exceeding credibility, the species of devoted attachment with which France formerly regarded the ancient line of her kings.

The nobility shared with the king in the advantages which this predilection spread around him. If the monarch was regarded as the chief ornament of the community, they were the minor gems by whose lustre that of the crown was relieved or adorned. If he was the supreme general of the state, they were the officers attached to his person, and necessary to the execution of his commands, each in his degree bound to advance the honour and glory of the common country. When such sentiments were at their height, there could be no murmuring against the peculiar privileges of the nobility, any more than against the almost absolute authority of the monarch. Each had that rank in the state which was regarded as their birthright, and for one of the lower orders to repine that he enjoyed not the immunities peculiar to the noblesse, would have been as unavailing, and as foolish, as to lament that he was not born to an independent estate. Thus, the Frenchman, contented, though with an illusion, laughed, danced, and indulged all the gaiety of his national character, in circumstances under which his insular neighbours would have thought the slightest token of patience dishonourable and degrading. The distress or privation which the French plebeian suffered in his own person, was made up to him in imagination by his interest in the national glory.

Was a citizen of Paris postponed in rank to the lowest military officer, he consoled himself by reading the victories of the French arms in the Gazette; and was he unduly and unequally taxed to support the expense of the crown, still the public feasts which were given, and the palaces which were built, were to him a source of compensation. He looked on at the Carousel, he admired the splendour of Versailles, and enjoyed a reflected share of their splendour, in recollecting that they displayed the magnificence of his country. This state of things, however illusory, seemed, while the illusion lasted, to realize the wish of those legislators, who have endeavoured to form a general fund of national happiness, from which each individual is to draw his personal share of enjoyment. If the monarch enjoyed the display of his own grace and agility, while he hunted, or rode at the ring, the spectators had their share of pleasure in witnessing it: if Louis had the satisfaction of beholding the splendid piles of Versailles and the Louvre arise at his command, the subject admired them when raised, and his real portion of pleasure was not, perhaps, inferior to that of the founder. The people were like men inconveniently placed in a crowded theatre, who think little of the personal inconveniences they are subjected to by the heat and pressure, while their mind is engrossed by the splendours of the representation. In short, not only the political opinions of Frenchmen, but their actual feelings, were, in the earlier days of the eighteenth century, expressed in the motto which they chose for their national palace—"Earth hath no Nation like the French—no Nation a City like Paris, or a King like Louis."

The French enjoyed this assumed superiority with the less chance of being undeceived, that they listened not to any voice from other lands, which pointed out the deficiencies in the frame of government under which they lived, or which hinted the superior privileges enjoyed by the subjects of a more free state. The intense love of our own country, and admiration of its constitution, is usually accompanied with a contempt or dislike of foreign states, and their modes of government. The French, in the reign of Louis XIV., enamoured of their own institutions, regarded those of other nations as unworthy of their consideration; and if they paused for a moment to gaze on the complicated constitution of their great rival, it was soon dismissed as a subject totally unintelli-

gible, with some expression of pity, perhaps, for the poor sovereign who had the ill luck to preside over a government embarrassed by so many restraints and limitations.* Yet, into whatever political errors the French people were led by the excess of their loyalty, it would be unjust to brand them as a nation of a mean and slavish spirit. Servitude infers dishonour, and dishonour to a Frenchman is the last of evils. Burke more justly regarded them as a people misled to their disadvantage, by high and romantic ideas of honour and fidelity, and who, actuated by a principle of public spirit in their submission to their monarch, worshipped, in his person, the Fortune of France, their common country.

During the reign of Louis XIV., every thing tended to support the sentiment which connected the national honour with the wars and undertakings of the king. His success, in the earlier years of his reign, was splendid, and he might be regarded for many years, as the Dictator of Europe. During this period, the universal opinion of his talents, together with his successes abroad, and his magnificence at home, fostered the idea that the Grand Monarque was in himself the tutelar deity, and only representative, of the great nation whose powers he wielded. Sorrow and desolation came on his latter years; but be it said to the honour of the French people, that the devoted allegiance they had paid to Louis in prosperity, was not withdrawn when fortune seemed to have turned her back upon her original favourite. France poured her youth forth as readily, if not so gaily, to repair the defeats of her monarch's old age, as she had previously yielded them to secure and extend the victories of his early reign. Louis had perfectly succeeded in establishing the crown as the sole pivot upon which public affairs turned, and in attaching to his person, as the representative of France, all the importance which in other countries is given to the great body of the nation.

Nor had the spirit of the French monarchy, in surrounding itself with all the dignity of absolute power, failed to secure the support of those auxiliaries which have the most extended influence upon the public mind, by engaging at once religion and literature in defence of its authority. The Gallican Church, more dependent upon the monarch, and less so upon the Pope, than is usual in Catholic countries, gave to the power of the crown all the mysterious and supernatural terrors annexed to an origin in divine right, and directed against those who encroached on the limits of the royal prerogative, or even ventured to scrutinize too minutely the foundation of its authority, the penalties annexed to a breach of the divine law. Louis XIV. repaid this important service by a constant, and even scrupulous attention to observances prescribed by the church, which strengthened, in the eyes of the public, the alliance so strictly formed betwixt the altar and the throne. Those who look to the private morals of the monarch may indeed form some doubt of the sincerity of his religious professions, considering how little they influenced his practice; and yet when we reflect upon the frequent inconsistencies of mankind in this particular, we may hesitate to charge with hypocrisy a conduct, which was dictated perhaps as much by conscience as by political convenience. Even judging more severely, it must be allowed that hypocrisy, though so different from religion, indicates its existence, as smoke points out that of pure fire. Hypocrisy cannot exist unless religion be to a certain extent held in esteem, because no one would be at the trouble to assume a mask which was not respectable, and so far compliance with the external forms of religion is a tribute paid to the doctrines which it teaches. The hypocrite assumes a virtue if he has it not,

* The old French proverb bore,

Le roi d'Angleterre
Est le roi d'Enfer.

and the example of his conduct may be salutary to others, though his pretensions to piety are wickedness to Him, who trieth the heart and reins.

On the other hand, the Academy formed by the wily Richelieu served to unite the literature of France into one focus, under the immediate patronage of the crown, to whose bounty its professors were taught to look even for the very means of subsistence. The greater nobles caught this ardour of patronage from the sovereign, and as the latter pensioned and supported the principal literary characters of his reign, the former granted shelter and support to others of the same rank, who were lodged at their hotels, fed at their tables, and were admitted to their society upon terms somewhat less degrading than those which were granted to artists and musicians, and who gave to the Great, knowledge or amusement in exchange for the hospitality they received. Men in a situation so subordinate, could only at first accommodate their compositions to the taste and interest of their protectors. They heightened by adulation and flattery the claims of the king and the nobles upon the community; and the nation, indifferent at that time to all literature which was not of native growth, felt their respect for their own government enhanced and extended by the works of those men of genius who flourished under its protection.

Such was the system of French monarchy, and such it remained, in outward show at least, until the Peace of Fontainebleau. But its foundation had been gradually undermined; public opinion had undergone a silent but almost a total change, and it might be compared to some ancient tower swayed from its base by the lapse of time, and waiting the first blast of a hurricane, or shock of an earthquake, to be prostrated in the dust. How the lapse of half a century, or little more, could have produced a change so total, must next be considered; and this can only be done by viewing separately the various changes which the lapse of years had produced on the various orders of the State.

First, then, it is to be observed, that in these latter times the wasting effects of luxury and vanity had totally ruined a great part of the French nobility, a word which, in respect of that country, comprehended what is called in Britain the nobility and gentry, or natural aristocracy of the kingdom. This body, during the reign of Louis XIV., though far even then from supporting the part which their fathers had acted in history, yet existed, as it were, through their remembrances, and disguised their dependence upon the throne by the outward show of fortune, as well as by the consequence attached to hereditary right. They were one step nearer the days, not then totally forgotten, when the nobles of France, with their retainers, actually formed the army of the kingdom; and they still presented, to the imagination at least, the descendants of a body of chivalrous heroes, ready to tread in the path of their ancestors, should the times ever render necessary the calling forth the Ban, or Arriere-Ban—the feudal array of the Gallic chivalry. But this delusion had passed away; the defence of states was intrusted in France, as in other countries, to the exertions of a standing army; and, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the nobles of France presented a melancholy contrast to their predecessors.

The number of the order was of itself sufficient to diminish its consequence. It had been imprudently increased by new creations. There were in the kingdom about eighty thousand families enjoying the privileges of nobility; and the order was divided into different classes, which looked on each other with mutual jealousy and contempt.

The first general distinction was betwixt the Ancient, and Modern, or new noblesse. The former were nobles of old creation, whose ancestors had obtained their rank from real or supposed services rendered to the nation in her councils or her battles. The new nobles had found an easier access to the same elevation, by the purchase of territories, or of offices, or of letters of no-

bility, any of which easy modes invested the owners with titles and rank, often held by men whose wealth had been accumulated in mean and sordid occupations, or by farmers-general, and financiers, whom the people considered as acquiring their fortunes at the expense of the state. These numerous additions to the privileged body of nobles accorded ill with its original composition, and introduced schism and disunion into the body itself. The descendants of the ancient chivalry of France looked with scorn and contempt upon the new men, who, rising perhaps from the very lees of the people, claimed from superior wealth a share in the privileges of the aristocracy.

Again, secondly, there was, amongst the ancient nobles themselves, but too ample room for division between the upper and wealthier class of nobility, who had fortunes adequate to maintain their rank, and the much more numerous body, whose poverty rendered them pensioners upon the state for the means of supporting their dignity. Of about one thousand houses, of which the ancient noblesse is computed to have consisted, there were not above two or three hundred families who had retained the means of maintaining their rank without the assistance of the crown. Their claims to monopolize commissions in the army, and situations in the government, together with their exemption from taxes, were their sole resources; resources burthensome to the state, and odious to the people, without being in the same degree beneficial to those who enjoyed them. Even in military service, which was considered as their birthright, the nobility of the second class were seldom permitted to rise above a certain limited rank. Long service might exalt one of them to the *grade* of lieutenant-colonel, or the government of some small town, but all the better rewards of a life spent in the army were reserved for nobles of the highest order. It followed as a matter of course, that amidst so many of this privileged body who languished in poverty, and could not rise from it by the ordinary paths of industry, some must have had recourse to loose and dishonourable practices; and that gambling-houses and places of debauchery should have been frequented and patronized by individuals, whose ancient descent, titles, and emblems of nobility, did not save them from the suspicion of very dishonourable conduct, the disgrace of which affected the character of the whole body.

There must be noticed a third classification of the order, into the Haute Noblesse, or men of the highest rank, most of whom spent their lives at court, and in discharge of the great offices of the crown and state, and the Noblesse Campagnarde, who continued to reside upon their patrimonial estates in the provinces.

The noblesse of the latter class had fallen gradually into a state of general contempt, which was deeply to be regretted. They were ridiculed and scorned by the courtiers, who despised the rusticity of their manners, and by the nobles of newer creation, who, conscious of their own wealth, contemned the poverty of these ancient but decayed families. The "bold peasant" himself, is not more a kingdom's pride than is the plain country gentleman, who, living on his own means, and amongst his own people, becomes the natural protector and referee of the farmer and the peasant, and in case of need, either the firmest assertor of their rights and his own against the aggressions of the crown, or the independent and undaunted defender of the crown's rights, against the innovations of political fanaticism. In La Vendée alone, the nobles had united their interest and their fortune with those of the peasants who cultivated their estates, and there alone were they found in their proper and honourable character of proprietors residing on their own domains, and discharging the duties which are inalienably attached to the owner of landed property. And—mark-worthy circumstance!—in La Vendée alone was any stand made in behalf of the ancient proprietors, constitution, or religion of France; for there alone

the nobles and the cultivators of the soil held towards each other their natural and proper relations of patron and client, faithful dependents, and generous and affectionate superiors. In the other provinces of France, the nobility, speaking generally, possessed neither power nor influence among the peasantry, while the population around them was guided and influenced by men belonging to the church to the law, or to business; classes which were in general better educated, better informed, and possessed of more talent and knowledge of the world, than the poor Noblesse Campagnarde, who seemed as much limited, caged, and imprisoned, within the restraints of their rank, as if they had been shut up within the dungeons of their ruinous chateaux; and who had only their titles and dusty parchments to oppose to the real superiority of wealth and information so generally to be found in the class which they affected to despise. Hence, Ségur describes the country gentlemen of his younger days as punctilious, ignorant, and quarrelsome, shunned by the better-informed of the middle classes, idle and dissipated, and wasting their leisure hours in coffee-houses, theatres, and billiard-rooms.

The more wealthy families, and the high noblesse, as they were called, saw this degradation of the inferior part of their order without pity, or rather with pleasure. These last had risen as much above their natural duties, as the rural nobility had sunk beneath them. They had too well followed the course which Richelieu had contrived to recommend to their fathers, and instead of acting as the natural chiefs and leaders of the nobility and gentry of the provinces, they were continually engaged in intriguing for charges round the king's person, for posts in the administration, for additional titles and decorations—for all and every thing which could make the successful courtier, and distinguish him from the independent noble. Their education and habits also were totally unfavourable to grave or serious thought and exertion. If the trumpet had sounded, it would have found a ready echo in their bosoms; but light literature at best, and much more frequently silly and frivolous amusements, a constant pursuit of pleasure, and a perpetual succession of intrigues, either of love or petty politics, made their character, in time of peace, approach in insignificance to that of the women of the court, whom it was the business of their lives to captivate and amuse.* There were noble exceptions, but in general the order, in every thing but military courage, had assumed a trivial and effeminate character, from which patriotic sacrifices, or masculine wisdom, were scarcely to be expected.

While the first nobles of France were engaged in these frivolous pursuits, their procureurs, bailiffs, stewards, intendants, or by whatsoever name their agents and managers were designated, enjoyed the real influence which their constituents, rejected as beneath them, rose into a degree of authority and credit, which eclipsed recollection of the distant and regardless proprietor, and formed a rank in the state not very different from that of the middle-men in Ireland. These agents were necessarily of plebeian birth, and their profession required that they should be familiar with the details of public business, which they administered in the name of their seigneurs. Many of this condition gained power and wealth in the course of the Revolution, thus succeeding, like an able and intelligent vizier, to the power which was forfeited by the idle and voluptuous sultan. Of the high noblesse it might with truth be said, that they still formed the grace of the court of France, though they had ceased to be its defence. They were accomplished, brave, full of honour, and in many instances endowed with talent. But the communication was

* See, for a curious picture of the life of the French nobles of fifty years since, the first volume of Madame Genlis' *Memoirs*. Had there been any more solid pursuits in society than the gay trifles she so pleasantly describes, they could not have escaped so intelligent an observer.

broken off betwixt them and the subordinate orders, over whom, in just degree, they ought to have possessed a natural influence. The chain of gradual and insensible connexion was rusted by time, in almost all its dependencies; forcibly distorted, and contemptuously wrenched asunder, in many. The noble had neglected and flung from him the most precious jewel in his coronet—the love and respect of the country-gentleman, the farmer, and the peasant, an advantage so natural to his condition in a well-constituted society, and founded upon principles so estimable, that he who contemns or destroys it, is guilty of little less than high treason, both to his own rank, and to the community in general. Such a change, however, had taken place in France, so that the noblesse might be compared to a court-sword, the hilt carved, ornamented, and gilded, such as might grace a day of parade, but the blade gone, or composed of the most worthless materials.

It only remains to be mentioned that there subsisted, besides all the distinctions we have noticed, an essential difference in political opinions among the noblesse themselves, considered as a body. There were many of the order, who, looking to the exigencies of the kingdom, were patriotically disposed to sacrifice their own exclusive privileges, in order to afford a chance of its regeneration. These of course were disposed to favour an alteration or reform in the original constitution of France; but besides these enlightened individuals, the nobility had the misfortune to include many disappointed and desperate men, ungratified by any of the advantages which their rank made them capable of receiving, and whose advantages of birth and education only rendered them more deeply dangerous, or more daringly profligate. A plebeian dishonoured by his vices, or depressed by the poverty which is their consequence, sinks easily into the insignificance from which wealth or character alone raised him; but the noble often retains the means, as well as the desire, to avenge himself on society, for an expulsion which he feels not the less because he is conscious of deserving it. Such were the debauched Roman youth, among whom were found Catiline, and associates equal in talents and in depravity to their leader; and such was the celebrated Mirabeau, who, almost expelled from his own class, as an irreclaimable profligate, entered the arena of the Revolution as a first-rate reformer, and a popular advocate of the lower orders.

The state of the Church, that second pillar of the throne, was scarce more solid than that of the Nobility. Generally speaking, it might be said, that, for a long time, the higher orders of the clergy had ceased to take a vital concern in their profession, or to exercise its functions in a manner which interested the feelings and affections of men.

The Catholic Church had grown old, and unfortunately did not possess the means of renovating her doctrines, or improving her constitution, so as to keep pace with the enlargement of the human understanding. The lofty claims to infallibility which she had set up and maintained during the Middle Ages, claims which she could neither renounce nor modify now threatened, in more enlightened times, like battlements too heavy for the foundation, to be the means of ruining the edifice they were designed to defend. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*, continued to be the motto of the Church of Rome. She could explain nothing, soften nothing, renounce nothing, consistently with her assertion of impeccability. The whole trash which had been accumulated for ages of darkness and ignorance, whether consisting of extravagant pretensions, incredible assertions, absurd doctrines which confounded the understanding, or puerile ceremonies which revolted the taste, were alike incapable of being explained away or abandoned. It would certainly have been (humanly speaking) advantageous, alike for the Church of Rome, and for Christianity in general, that the former had possessed the means of relinquishing her extrava-

gant claims, modifying her more obnoxious doctrines, and retrenching her superstitious ceremonial, as increasing knowledge showed the injustice of the one, and the absurdity of the other. But this power she dared not assume; and hence, perhaps, the great schism which divides the Christian world, which might otherwise never have existed, or at least not in its present extended and embittered state. But, in all events, the Church of Rome, retaining the spiritual empire over so large and fair a portion of the Christian world, would not have been reduced to the alternative of either defending propositions, which, in the eyes of all enlightened men, are altogether untenable, or of beholding the most essential and vital doctrines of Christianity confounded with them, and the whole system exposed to the scorn of the infidel. The more enlightened and better informed part of the French nation had fallen very generally into the latter extreme.

Infidelity, in attacking the absurd claims and extravagant doctrines of the Church of Rome, had artfully availed herself of those abuses, as if they had been really a part of the Christian religion; and they whose credulity could not digest the grossest articles of the papist creed, thought themselves entitled to conclude, in general, against religion itself, from the abuses engrafted upon it by ignorance and priestcraft. The same circumstances which favoured the assault, tended to weaken the defence. Embarrassed by the necessity of defending the mass of human inventions with which their Church had obscured and deformed Christianity, the Catholic clergy were not the best advocates even in the best of causes; and though there were many brilliant exceptions, yet it must be owned that a great part of the higher orders of the priesthood gave themselves little trouble about maintaining the doctrines, or extending the influence of the Church, considering it only in the light of an asylum, where, under the condition of certain renunciations, they enjoyed, in indolent tranquillity, a state of ease and luxury. Those who thought on the subject more deeply, were contented quietly to repose the safety of the Church upon the restrictions on the press, which prevented the possibility of free discussion. The usual effect followed; and many who, if manly and open debate upon theological subjects had been allowed, would doubtless have been enabled to winnow the wheat from the chaff, were, in the state of darkness to which they were reduced, led to reject Christianity itself, along with the corruptions of the Romish Church, and to become absolute infidels instead of reformed Christians.

The long and violent dispute also betwixt the Jesuits and the Jansenists, had for many years tended to lessen the general consideration for the Church at large, and especially for the higher orders of the clergy. In that quarrel, much had taken place that was disgraceful. The mask of religion has been often used to cover more savage and extensive persecutions, but at no time did the spirit of intrigue, of personal malice, of slander and circumvention, appear more disgustingly from under the sacred disguise; and in the eyes of the thoughtless and the vulgar, the general cause of religion suffered in proportion.

The number of the clergy who were thus indifferent to doctrine or duty, was greatly increased, since the promotion to the great benefices had ceased to be distributed with regard to the morals, piety, talents, and erudition of the candidates, but was bestowed among the younger branches of the noblesse, upon men who were at little pains to reconcile the looseness of their former habits and opinions with the sanctity of their new profession, and who, embracing the Church solely as a means of maintenance, were little calculated by their lives or learning to extend its consideration. Among other vile innovations of the celebrated regent Duke of Orleans, he set the most barefaced example of such dishonourable preferment, and had increased in proportion

the contempt entertained for the hierarchy, even in its highest dignities, since how was it possible to respect the purple itself, after it had covered the shoulders of the infamous Dubois?

It might have been expected, and it was doubtless in a great measure the case, that the respect paid to the characters and efficient utility of the curates, upon whom, generally speaking, the charge of souls actually devolved, might have made up for the want of consideration withheld from the higher orders of the Church. There can be no doubt that this respectable body of churchmen possessed great and deserved influence over their parishioners; but then they were themselves languishing under poverty and neglect, and, as human beings, cannot be supposed to have viewed with indifference their superiors enjoying wealth and ease, while in some cases they dishonoured the robe they wore, and in others disowned the doctrines they were appointed to teach. Alive to feelings so natural, and mingling with the middling classes, of which they formed a most respectable portion, they must necessarily have become imbued with their principles and opinions, and a very obvious train of reasoning would extend the consequences to their own condition. If the state was encumbered rather than benefited by the privileges of the higher order, was not the Church in the same condition? And if secular rank was to be thrown open as a general object of ambition to the able and the worthy, ought not the dignities of the Church to be rendered more accessible to those, who, in humility and truth, discharged the toilsome duties of its inferior offices, and who might therefore claim, in due degree of succession, to attain higher preferment? There can be no injustice in ascribing to this body sentiments, which might have been no less just regarding the Church than advantageous to themselves; and, accordingly, it was not long before this body of churchmen showed distinctly, that their political views were the same with those of the Third Estate, to which they solemnly united themselves, strengthening thereby greatly the first revolutionary movements. But their conduct, when they beheld the whole system of their religion aimed at, should acquit the French clergy of the charge of self-interest, since no body, considered as such, ever showed itself more willing to encounter persecution, and submit to privation, for conscience' sake.

While the Noblesse and the Church, considered as branches of the state, were thus divided amongst themselves, and fallen into discredit with the nation at large; while they were envied for their ancient immunities, without being any longer feared for their power; while they were ridiculed at once and hated for the assumption of a superiority which their personal qualities did not always vindicate, the lowest order, the Commons, or, as they were at that time termed, the Third Estate, had gradually acquired an extent and importance unknown to the feudal ages, in which originated the ancient division of the estates of the kingdom. The Third Estate no longer, as in the days of Henry IV., consisted merely of the burghers and petty traders in the small towns of a feudal kingdom, bred up almost as the vassals of the nobles and clergy, by whose expenditure they acquired their living. Commerce and colonies had introduced wealth, from sources to which the nobles and the churchmen had no access. Not only a very great proportion of the disposable capital was in the hands of the Third Estate, who thus formed the bulk of the moneyed interest of France, but a large share of the landed property was also in their possession.

There was, moreover, the influence which many plebeians possessed, as creditors, over those needy nobles whom they had supplied with money, while another portion of the same class rose into wealth and consideration, at the expense of the more opulent patricians who were ruining themselves. Paris had increased to a tremendous extent, and her citizens had risen to a corresponding degree of consideration; and while they profited by the luxury and dissipation,

both of the court and courtiers, had become rich in proportion as the government and privileged classes grew poor. Those citizens who were thus enriched, endeavoured, by bestowing on their families all the advantages of good education, to counterbalance their inferiority of birth, and to qualify their children to support their part in the scenes, to which their altered fortunes, and the prospects of the country, appeared to call them. In short, it is not too much to say, that the middling classes acquired the advantages of wealth, consequence, and effective power, in a proportion more than equal to that in which the nobility had lost these attributes. Thus, the Third Estate seemed to increase in extent, number, and strength, like a waxing inundation, threatening with every increasing wave to overwhelm the ancient and decayed barriers of exclusions and immunities, behind which the privileged ranks still fortified themselves.

It was not in the nature of man, that the bold, the talented, the ambitious, of a rank which felt its own power and consequence, should be long contented to remain acquiescent in political regulations, which depressed them in the state of society beneath men to whom they felt themselves equal in all respects, excepting the factitious circumstances of birth, or of church orders. It was no less impossible that they should long continue satisfied with the feudal dogma, which exempted the noblesse from taxes, because they served the nation with their sword, and the clergy, because they propitiated Heaven in its favour with their prayers. The maxim, however true in the feudal ages when it originated, had become an extravagant legal fiction in the eighteenth century, when all the world knew that both the noble soldier and the priest were paid for the services they no longer rendered to the state, while the *roturier* had both valour and learning to fight his own battles and perform his own devotions; and when, in fact, it was their arms which combated, and their learning which enlightened the state, rather than those of the privileged orders.

Thus, a body, opulent and important, and carrying along with their claims the sympathy of the whole people, were arranged in formidable array against the privileges of the nobles and clergy, and bound to further the approaching changes by the strongest of human ties, emulation and self-interest.

The point was stated with unusual frankness by Emery, a distinguished member of the National Assembly, and a man of honour and talent. In the course of a confidential communication with the celebrated Marquis de Bouillé, the latter had avowed his principles of royalty, and his detestation of the new constitution, to which he said he only rendered obedience, because the King had sworn to maintain it. "You are right, being yourself a nobleman," replied Emery, with equal candour; "and had I been born noble, such would have been my principles; but I, a plebeian *Avocat*, will adhere to that constitution which has called me, and those of my rank, out of the state of incapacity and degradation in which the Revolution found us."

Considering the situation, therefore, of the three separate bodies, which, before the revolutionary impulse commenced, were the constituent parts of the kingdom of France, it was evident, that in case of a collision, the Nobles and Clergy might esteem themselves fortunate, if, divided as they were among themselves, they could maintain an effectual defence of the whole, or a portion of their privileges, while the Third Estate, confident in their numbers and in their unanimity, were ready to assail and carry by storm the whole system, over the least breach which might be effected in the ancient constitution. Lally Tolendal gave a comprehensive view of the state of parties in these words:—"The Commons desired to conquer, the Nobles to preserve what they already possessed. The Clergy stood inactive, resolved to join the victorious party. If there was a man in France who wished for concord and peace, it was the King."

CHAPTER II.

State of France continued.—State of Public Opinion.—Men of Letters encouraged by the Great.—Disadvantages attending this Patronage.—Licentious tendency of the French Literature—Their Irreligious and Infidel Opinions.—Free Opinions on Politics permitted to be expressed in an abstract and speculative, but not in a practical Form.—Disadvantages arising from the Suppression of Free Discussion.—Anglomania.—Share of France in the American War.—Disposition of the Troops who returned from America.

WE have viewed France as it stood in its grand political divisions previous to the Revolution, and we have seen that there existed strong motives for change, and that a great force was prepared to level institutions which were crumbling to pieces of themselves. It is now necessary to review the state of the popular mind, and consider upon what principles, and to what extent, the approaching changes were likely to operate, and at what point they might be expected to stop. Here, as with respect to the ranks of society, a tacit but almost total change had been operated in the feelings and sentiments of the public, principally occasioned, doubtless, by the great ascendancy acquired by literature—that tree of knowledge of good and evil, which, amidst the richest and most wholesome fruit, bears others, fair in show, and sweet to the taste, but having the properties of the most deadly poison.

The French, the most ingenious people in Europe, and the most susceptible of those pleasures which arise from conversation and literary discussion, had early called in the assistance of men of genius to enhance their relish for society. The nobles, without renouncing their aristocratic superiority,—which, on the contrary, was rendered more striking by the contrast,—permitted literary talents to be a passport into their saloons. The wealthy financier, and opulent merchant, emulated the nobility in this as in other articles of taste and splendour; and their coteries, as well as those of the aristocracy, were open to men of letters, who were in many cases contented to enjoy luxury at the expense of independence. Assuredly this species of patronage, while it often flowed from the vanity or egotism of the patrons, was not much calculated to enhance the character of those who were protected. Professors of literature, thus mingling in the society of the noble and the wealthy upon sufferance held a rank scarce more high than that of musicians or actors, from amongst whom individuals have often, by their talents and character, become members of the best society, while the castes, to which such individuals belong, remain in general exposed to the most humiliating contempt. The lady of quality, who smiled on the man of letters, and the man of rank, who admitted him to his intimacy, still retained their consciousness that he was not like themselves, formed out of the “porcelain clay of the earth,” and even while receiving their bounties, or participating in their pleasures, the favourite *savant* must often have been disturbed by the reflection, that he was only considered as a creature of sufferance, whom the caprice of fashion, or a sudden reaction of the ancient etiquette, might fling out of the society where he was at present tolerated. Under this disheartening, and even degrading inferiority, the man of letters might be tempted invidiously to compare the luxurious style of living at which he sat a permitted guest, with his own paltry hired apartment, and scanty and uncertain chance of support. And even those of a nobler mood, when they had conceded to their benefactors all the gratitude they could justly demand, must sometimes have regretted their own situation,

**"Condemn'd as needy supplicants to wait,
While ladies interpose and slaves debate."**

It followed, that many of the men of letters, thus protected, became enemies of the persons, as well as the rank of their patrons; as, for example, no one in the course of the Revolution expressed greater hatred to the nobility than Champfort, the favourite and favoured secretary of the Prince of Condé. Occasions, too, must frequently have occurred, in which the protected person was almost inevitably forced upon comparing his own natural and acquired talents with those of his aristocratic patron, and the result could not be other than a dislike of the institutions which placed him so far behind persons whom, but for those prescribed limits, he must have passed in the career of honour and distinction.

Hence arose that frequent and close inquiry into the origin of ranks, that general system of impugning the existing regulations, and appealing to the original states of society in vindication of the original equality of mankind—hence those ingenious arguments, and eloquent tirades in favour of primitive and even savage independence; which the patricians of the day read and applauded with such a smile of mixed applause and pity, as they would have given to the reveries of a crazed poet, while the inferior ranks, participating the feelings under which they were written, caught the ardour of the eloquent authors, and rose from the perusal with minds prepared to act, whenever action should be necessary to realize a vision so flattering.

It might have been expected that those belonging to the privileged classes at least, would have caught the alarm, from hearing doctrines so fatal to their own interests avowed so boldly, and maintained with so much talent. It might have been thought that they would have started, when Raynal proclaimed to the nations of the earth that they could only be free and happy when they had overthrown every throne and every altar; but no such alarm was taken. Men of rank considered liberal principles as the fashion of the day, and embraced them as the readiest mode of showing that they were above vulgar prejudices. In short, they adopted political opinions as they put on round hats and jockey-coats, merely because they were current in good society. They assumed the tone of philosophers as they would have done that of Arcadian shepherds at a masquerade, but without any more thoughts of sacrificing their own interests and immunities in the one case, than of actually driving their flocks a-field in the other. Count Ségur gives a most interesting account of the opinions of the young French nobles, in which he himself partook at this eventful period.

"Impeded in this light career by the antiquated pride of the old court, the irksome etiquette of the old order of things, the severity of the old clergy, the aversion of our parents to our new fashions and our costumes, which were favourable to the principles of equality, we felt disposed to adopt with enthusiasm the philosophical doctrines professed by literary men, remarkable for their boldness and their wit. Voltaire seduced our imagination; Rousseau touched our hearts; we felt a secret pleasure in seeing that their attacks were directed against an old fabric, which presented to us a Gothic and ridiculous appearance.

"We were thus pleased at this petty war, although it was undermining our own ranks and privileges, and the remains of our ancient power; but we felt not these attacks personally; we merely witnessed them. It was as yet but a war of words and paper, which did not appear to us to threaten the superiority of existence we enjoyed, consolidated as we thought it, by a possession of many centuries.

* * * * *

"We were pleased with the courage of liberty, whatever language it assumed, and with the convenience of equality. There is a satisfaction in de-

ascending from a high rank, as long as the resumption of it is thought to be free and unobstructed; and regardless, therefore, of consequences, we enjoyed our patrician advantages, together with the sweets of a plebeian philosophy."

We anxiously desire not to be mistaken. It is not the purport of these remarks to blame the French aristocracy for extending their patronage to learning and to genius. The purpose was honourable to themselves, and fraught with high advantages to the progress of society. The favour of the Great supplied the want of public encouragement, and fostered talent which otherwise might never have produced its important and inappreciable fruits. But it had been better for France, her nobility, and her literature, had the patronage been extended in some manner which did not intimately associate the two classes of men. The want of independence of circumstances is a severe if not an absolute check to independence of spirit; and thus it often happened, that, to gratify the passions of their protectors, or to advance their interest, the men of letters were involved in the worst and most scandalous labyrinths of *tracasserie*, slander, and malignity; that they were divided into desperate factions against each other, and reduced to practise all those arts of dissimulation, flattery, and intrigue, which are the greatest shame of the literary profession.

As the eighteenth century advanced, the men of literature rose in importance, and aware of their own increasing power in a society which was dependent on them for intellectual gratification, they supported each other in their claims to what began to be considered the dignity of a man of letters. This was soon carried into extremes, and assumed, even in the halls of their protectors, a fanatical violence of opinion, and a dogmatical mode of expression, which made the veteran Fontenelle declare himself terrified for the frightful degree of *certainly* that folks met with every where in society. The truth is, that men of letters, being usually men of mere theory, have no opportunity of measuring the opinions which they have adopted upon hypothetical reasoning, by the standard of practical experiment. They feel their mental superiority to those whom they live with, and become habitual believers in, and assertors of, their own infallibility. If moderation, command of passions and of temper, be part of philosophy, we seldom find less philosophy actually displayed, than by a philosopher in defence of a favourite theory. Nor have we found that philosophers are so desirous of forming proselytes, or soldiers of extending conquests as philosophers in making converts to their own opinions.

In France they had discovered the command which they had acquired over the public mind, and united as they were, (and more especially the Encyclopedists,) they augmented and secured that impression, by never permitting the doctrines which they wished to propagate to die away upon the public ear. For this purpose, they took care their doctrines should be echoed, like thunder amongst hills, from a hundred different points, presented in a hundred new lights, illustrated by a hundred various methods, until the public could no longer help receiving that as undeniable which they heard from so many different quarters. They could also direct every weapon of satirical hostility against those who ventured to combat their doctrines, and as their wrath was neither easily endured nor pacified, they drove from the field most of those authors, who, in opposition to their opinions, might have exerted themselves as champions of the church and monarchy.

We have already hinted at the disadvantages under which literature labours, when it is under the protection of private individuals of opulence, rather than of the public. But in yet another important respect, the air of *salons*, *ruelles*, and *boudoirs*, is fatal, in many cases, to the masculine spirit of philosophical self-denial which gives dignity to literary society. They who make part of the gay society of a corrupted metropolis, must lend their countenance to follies and vices, if they do not themselves practise them; and hence, perhaps, French

Literature, more than any other in Europe, has been liable to the reproach of lending its powerful arm to undermine whatever was serious in morals, or hitherto considered as fixed in principle. Some of their greatest authors, even Montesquieu himself, have varied their deep reasonings on the origin of government, and the most profound problems of philosophy, with licentious tales tending to inflame the passions. Hence, partaking of the licence of its professors, the degraded literature of modern times called in to its alliance that immorality, which not only Christian, but even heathen philosophy had considered as the greatest obstacle to a pure, wise, and happy state of existence. The licentiousness which walked abroad in such disgusting and undisguised nakedness, was a part of the unhappy bequest left by the Regent Duke of Orleans to the country which he governed. The decorum of the court during the times of Louis XIV. had prevented such excesses; if there was enough of vice, it was at least decently veiled. But the conduct of Orleans and his minions was marked with open infamy, deep enough to have called down, in the age of miracles, an immediate judgment from Heaven; and crimes which the worst of the Roman emperors would have at least hidden in his solitary Isle of Caprea, were acted as publicly as if men had had no eyes, or God no thunderbolts.

From this filthy Cocytus flowed those streams of impurity which disgraced France during the reign of Louis XV., and which, notwithstanding the example of a prince who was himself a model of domestic virtue, continued in that of Louis XVI. to infect society, morals, and, above all, literature. We do not here allude merely to those lighter pieces of indecency in which humour and fancy outrun the bounds of delicacy. These are to be found in the literature of most nations, and are generally in the hands of mere libertines and men of pleasure, so well acquainted with the practice of vice, that the theory cannot make them worse than they are. But there was a strain of voluptuous and seducing immorality which pervaded not only the lighter and gayer compositions of the French, but tinged the writings of those who called the world to admire them as poets of the highest mood, or to listen as to philosophers of the most lofty pretensions. Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Montesquieu,—names which France must always esteem her highest honour,—were guilty in this particular, that the young and virtuous must either altogether abstain from works the which are everywhere the topic of ordinary discussion and admiration, or must peruse much that is hurtful to delicacy and dangerous to morals, in the formation of their future character. The latter alternative was universally adopted; for the curious will read as the thirsty will drink, though the cup and page be polluted.

So far had an indifference to delicacy influenced the society of France, and so widely spread was this habitual impurity of language and ideas, especially among those who pretended to philosophy, that Madame Roland, a woman admirable for courage and talents, and not, so far as appears, vicious in her private morals, not only mentions the profligate novels of Louvet as replete with the graces of imagination, the salt of criticism, and the tone of philosophy, but affords the public, in her own person, details with which a courtesan of the higher class should be unwilling to season her private conversation.*

This licence, with the corruption of morals, of which it is both the sign and the cause, leads directly to feelings the most inconsistent with manly and virtuous patriotism. Voluptuousness, and its consequences, render the libertine

* The particulars we allude to, though suppressed in the second edition of Madame Roland's Memoires, are restored in the collection of Memoires respecting the Revolution, now publishing at Paris. This is fair play; for if the details be disgusting, the light which they cast upon the character of the author is too valuable to be lost.

incapable of relish for what is simply and abstractedly beautiful or sublime, whether in literature or in the arts, and destroy the taste, while they degrade and blunt the understanding. But, above all, such libertinism leads to the exclusive pursuit of selfish gratification, for egotism is its foundation and its essence. Egotism is necessarily the very reverse of patriotism, since the one principle is founded exclusively upon the individual's pursuit of his own peculiar objects of pleasure or advantage, while the other demands a sacrifice, not only of these individual pursuits, but of fortune and life itself, to the cause of the public weal. Patriotism has, accordingly, always been found to flourish in that state of society which is most favourable to the stern and manly virtues of self-denial, temperance, chastity, contempt of luxury, patient exertion, and elevated contemplation; and the public spirit of a nation has invariably borne a just proportion to its private morals.

Religion cannot exist where immorality generally prevails, any more than a light can burn where the air is corrupted; and, accordingly, infidelity was so general in France, as to predominate in almost every rank of society. The errors of the Church of Rome, as we have already noticed, connected as they are with her ambitious attempts towards dominion over men, in their temporal as well as spiritual capacity, had long become the argument of the philosopher, and the jest of the satirist; but in exploding these pretensions, and holding them up to ridicule, the philosophers of the age involved with them the general doctrines of Christianity itself; nay, some went so far as not only to deny inspiration, but to extinguish, by their sophistry, the lights of natural religion, implanted in our bosoms as a part of our birthright. Like the disorderly rabble at the time of the Reformation, (but with infinitely deeper guilt,) they not only pulled down the symbols of idolatry, which ignorance or priestcraft had introduced into the Christian Church, but sacrilegiously defaced and desecrated the altar itself. This work the philosophers, as they termed themselves, carried on with such an unlimited and eager zeal, as plainly to show that infidelity, as well as divinity, hath its fanaticism. An envenomed fury against religion and all its doctrines; a promptitude to avail themselves of every circumstance by which Christianity could be misrepresented; an ingenuity in mixing up their opinions in works, which seemed the least fitting to involve such discussion; above all, a pertinacity in slandering, ridiculing, and vilifying all who ventured to oppose their principles, distinguished the correspondents in this celebrated conspiracy against a religion, which, however it may be defaced by human inventions, breathes only that peace on earth, and good will to the children of men, which was proclaimed by Heaven at its divine origin.

If these prejudiced and envenomed opponents had possessed half the desire of truth, or half the benevolence towards mankind, which were eternally on their lips, they would have formed the true estimate of the spirit of Christianity, not from the use which had been made of the mere name by ambitious priests and enthusiastic fools, but by its vital effects upon mankind at large. They would have seen, that under its influence a thousand brutal and sanguinary superstitions had died away; that polygamy had been abolished, and with polygamy all the obstacles which it offers to domestic happiness, as well as to the due education of youth, and the natural and gradual civilization of society. They must then have owned, that slavery, which they regarded or affected to regard with such horror, had first been gradually ameliorated, and finally abolished by the influence of the Christian doctrines—that there was no one virtue teaching to elevate mankind or benefit society, which was not enjoined by the precepts they endeavoured to misrepresent and weaken—no one vice by which humanity is degraded and society endangered, upon which Christianity hath not imposed a solemn anathema. They might also, in their capacity of philosophers, have considered the peculiar aptitude of the

Christian religion, not only to all ranks and conditions of mankind, but to all climates and to all stages of society. Nor ought it to have escaped them, that the system contains within itself a key to those difficulties, doubts, and mysteries, by which the human mind is agitated, so soon as it is raised beyond the mere objects which interest the senses. Milton has made the maze of metaphysics, and the bewildering state of mind which they engender, a part of the employment, and perhaps of the punishment, of the lower regions. Christianity alone offers a clew to this labyrinth, a solution to these melancholy and discouraging doubts; and however its doctrines may be hard to unaided flesh and blood, yet explaining as they do the system of the universe, which without them is so incomprehensible, and through their practical influence rendering men in all ages more worthy to act their part in the general plan, it seems wonderful how those, whose professed pursuit was wisdom, should have looked on religion not alone with that indifference, which was the only feeling evinced by the heathen philosophers towards the gross mythology of their time, but with hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. One would rather have expected, that after such a review, men professing the real spirit which searches after truth and wisdom, if unhappily they were still unable to persuade themselves that a religion so worthy of the Deity (if such an expression may be used) had emanated directly from revelation, might have had the modesty to lay their finger on their lip and distrust their own judgment, instead of disturbing the faith of others; or, if confirmed in their incredulity, might have taken the leisure to compute at least what was to be gained by rooting up a tree which bore such goodly fruits, without having the means of replacing it by aught which could produce the same advantage to the commonwealth.

Unhappily blinded by self-conceit, heated with the ardour of controversy, gratifying their literary pride by becoming members of a league, in which kings and princes were included, and procuring followers by flattering the vanity of some, and stimulating the cupidity of others, the men of the most distinguished parts in France became allied in a sort of anti-crusade against Christianity, and indeed against religious principles of every kind. How they succeeded is too universally known; and when it is considered that these men of letters, who ended by degrading the morals, and destroying the religion of so many of the citizens of France, had been first called into public estimation by the patronage of the higher orders, it is impossible not to think of the Israelitish champion, who, brought into the house of Dagon to make sport for the festive assembly, ended by pulling it down upon the heads of the guests—and upon his own.

We do not tax the whole nation of France with being infirm in religious faith, and relaxed in morals; still less do we aver that the Revolution, which broke forth in that country, owed its rise exclusively to the licence and infidelity, which were but too current there. The necessity of a great change in the principles of the ancient French monarchy, had its source in the usurpations of preceding kings over the liberties of the subject, and the opportunity for effecting this change was afforded by the weakness and pecuniary distresses of the present government. These would have existed had the French court, and her higher orders, retained the simple and virtuous manners of Sparta, united with the strong and pure faith of primitive Christians. The difference lay in this, that a simple, virtuous, and religious people would have rested content with such changes and alterations in the constitution of their government, as might remove the evils of which they had just and pressing reason to complain. They would have endeavoured to redress obvious and practical errors in the body politic, without being led into extremes either by the love of realizing visionary theories, the vanity of enforcing their own particular philosophical or political doctrines, or the selfish arguments of demagogues, who,

in the prospect of bettering their own situation by wealth, or obtaining scope for their ambition, aspired, in the words of the dramatic poet, to throw the elements of society into confusion, and thus

“—— disturb the peace of all the world,
To rule it when 'twas wildest.”

It was to such men as these last that Heaven, in punishment of the sins of France and of Europe, and perhaps to teach mankind a dreadful lesson, abandoned the management of the French Revolution, the original movements of which, so far as they went to secure to the people the restoration of their natural liberty, and the abolition of the usurpations of the crown, had become not only desirable through the change of times, and by the influence of public opinion, but peremptorily necessary and inevitable.

The feudal system of France, like that of the rest of Europe, had, in its original composition, all the germs of national freedom. The great peers, in whose hands the common defence was reposed, acknowledged the king's power as *suzerain*, obeyed his commands as their military leader, and attended his courts as their supreme judge; but recognised no despotic authority in the crown, and were prompt to defend the slightest encroachment upon their own rights. If they themselves were not equally tender of the rights and liberties of their own vassals, their acts of encroachment flowed not from the feudal system, but from its imperfections. The tendency and spirit of these singular institutions, were to preserve to each individual his just and natural rights; but a system, almost purely military, was liable to be frequently abused by the most formidable soldier, and was, besides, otherwise ill fitted to preserve rights which were purely civil. It is not necessary to trace the progress from the days of Louis XIII. downwards, by which ambitious monarchs, seconded by able and subtle ministers, contrived to emancipate themselves from the restraints of their powerful vassals, or by which the descendants of these high feudatories, who had been the controllers of the prince so soon as he outstepped the bounds of legitimate authority, were now ranked around the throne in the capacity of mere courtiers or satellites, who derived their lustre solely from the favour of royalty. This unhappy and short-sighted policy had, however, accomplished its end, and the Crown had concentrated within its prerogative almost the entire liberties of the French nation; and now, like an over-gorged animal of prey, had reason to repent its fatal voracity, while it lay almost helpless, exposed to the assaults of those whom it had despoiled.

We have already observed, that for a considerable time the Frenchman's love of his country had been transferred to the crown; that his national delight in martial glory fixed his attachment upon the monarch as the leader of his armies; and that this feeling had supported the devotion of the nation to Louis XIV., not only during his victories, but even amid his reverses. But the succeeding reign had less to impose on the imagination. The erection of a palace obtains for the nation the praise of magnificence, and the celebration of public and splendid festivals gives the people at least the pleasure of a holiday; the pensioning artists and men of letters, again, is honourable to the country which fosters the arts; but the court of Louis XV., undiminished in expense, was also selfish in its expenditure. The enriching of needy favourites, their relations, and their parasites, had none of the dazzling munificence of the Grand Monarque; and while the taxes became daily more oppressive on the subjects, the mode in which the revenue was employed not only became less honourable to the court, and less creditable to the country, but lost the dazzle and show which gives the lower orders pleasure as the beholders of a pageant.

The consolation which the imagination of the French had found in the military honour of their nation, seemed also about to fail them. The bravery of

the troops remained the same, but the genius of the commanders, and the fortune of the monarch under whose auspices they fought, had in a great measure abandoned them, and the destiny of France seemed to be on the wane. The victory of Fontenoy was all that was to be placed in opposition to the numerous disasters of the Seven Years' War, in which France was almost everywhere else defeated; and it was little wonder, that in a reign attended with so many subjects of mortification, the enthusiastic devotion of the people to the sovereign should begin to give way. The King had engrossed so much power in his own person, that he had become as it were personally responsible for every miscarriage and defeat which the country underwent. Such is the risk incurred by absolute monarchs, who are exposed to all the popular obloquy for mal-administration, from which, in limited governments, kings are in a great measure screened by the intervention of the other powers of the constitution, or by the responsibility of ministers for the measures which they advise; while he that has ascended to the actual peak and extreme summit of power, has no barrier left to secure him from the tempest.

Another and most powerful cause fanned the rising discontent, with which the French of the eighteenth century began to regard the government under which they lived. Like men awakened from a flattering dream, they compared their own condition with that of the subjects of free states, and perceived that they had either never enjoyed, or had been gradually robbed of, the chief part of the most valuable privileges and immunities to which man may claim a natural right. They had no national representation of any kind, and but for the slender barrier offered by the courts of justice, or parliaments, as they were called, were subject to unlimited exactions on the sole authority of the sovereign. The property of the nation was therefore at the disposal of the crown, which might increase taxes to any amount, and cause them to be levied by force, if force was necessary. The personal freedom of the citizen was equally exposed to aggressions by *lettres de cachet*. The French people, in short, had neither in the strict sense liberty nor property, and if they did not suffer all the inconveniences in practice which so evil a government announces, it was because public opinion, the softened temper of the age, and the good disposition of the kings themselves, did not permit the scenes of cruelty and despotism to be revived in the eighteenth century, which Louis XI. had practised three ages before.

These abuses, and others arising out of the disproportioned privileges of the noblesse and the clergy, who were exempted from contributing to the necessities of the state; the unequal mode of levying the taxes, and other great errors of the constitution; above all, the total absorption of every right and authority in the person of the sovereign.—these were too gross in their nature, and too destructive in their consequences, to have escaped deep thought on the part of reflecting persons, and hatred and dislike from those who suffered more or less under the practical evils.

They had not, in particular, eluded the observation and censure of the acute reasoners and deep thinkers, who had already become the guiding spirits of the age; but the despotism under which they lived prevented those speculations from assuming a practical and useful character. In a free country, the wise and the learned are not only permitted, but invited, to examine the institutions under which they live, to defend them against the suggestions of rash innovators, or to propose such alterations as the lapse of time and change of manners may render necessary. Their disquisitions are, therefore, usefully and beneficially directed to the repair of the existing government, not to its demolition, and if they propose alteration in parts, it is only for the purpose of securing the rest of the fabric. But in France, no opportunity was permitted of free discussion on politics, any more than on matters of religion.

An essay upon the French monarchy, showing by what means the existing institutions might have been brought more into union with the wishes and wants of the people, must have procured for its author a place in the Bastille; and yet subsequent events have shown, that a system, which might have introduced prudently and gradually into the decayed frame of the French government the spirit of liberty, which was originally inherent in every feudal monarchy, would have been the most valuable present which political wisdom could have rendered to the country. The bonds which pressed so heavily on the subject might thus have been gradually slackened, and at length totally removed, without the perilous expedient of casting them all loose at once. But the philosophers, who had certainly talents sufficient for the purpose, were not permitted to apply to the state of the French government the original principles on which it was founded, or to trace the manner in which usurpations and abuses had taken place, and propose a mode by which, without varying its form, those encroachments might be restrained, and those abuses corrected. An author was indeed at liberty to speculate at any length upon general doctrines of government; he might imagine to himself an Utopia or Atalantis, and argue upon abstract ideas of the rights in which government originates; but on no account was he permitted to render any of his lucubrations practically useful, by adapting them to the municipal regulations of France. The political sage was placed, with regard to his country, in the condition of a physician prescribing for the favourite Sultana of some jealous despot, whom he is required to cure without seeing his patient, and without obtaining any accurate knowledge of her malady, its symptoms, and its progress. In this manner the theory of government was kept studiously separated from the practice. The political philosopher might, if he pleased, speculate upon the former, but he was prohibited, under severe personal penalties, to illustrate the subject by any allusion to the latter. Thus, the eloquent and profound work of Montesquieu professed, indeed, to explain the general rights of the people, and the principles upon which government itself rested, but his pages show no mode by which these could be resorted to for the reformation of the constitution of his country. He laid before the patient a medical treatise on disease in general, instead of a special prescription, applying to his peculiar habits and distemper.

In consequence of these unhappy restrictions upon open and manly political discussion, the French government, in its actual state, was never represented as capable of either improvement or regeneration; and while general and abstract doctrines of original freedom were every where the subject of eulogy, it was never considered for a moment in what manner these new and more liberal principles could be applied to the improvement of the existing system. The natural conclusion must have been, that the monarchical government in France was either perfection in itself, and consequently stood in need of no reformation, or that it was so utterly inconsistent with the liberties of the people as to be susceptible of none. No one was hardy enough to claim for it the former character, and, least of all, those who presided in its councils, and seemed to acknowledge the imperfection of the system, by prohibiting all discussion on the subject. It seemed, therefore, to follow, as no unfair inference, that to obtain the advantages which the new elementary doctrines held forth, and which were so desirable and so much desired, a total abolition of the existing government to its very foundation, was an indispensable preliminary; and there is little doubt that this opinion prevailed so generally at the time of the Revolution, as to prevent any firm or resolute stand being made in defence even of such of the actual institutions of France, as might have been amalgamated with the proposed reform.

While all practical discussion of the constitution of France, as a subject

either above or beneath philosophical inquiry, was thus cautiously omitted in those works which pretended to treat of civil rights, that of England, with its counterpoises and checks, its liberal principle of equality of rights, the security which it affords for personal liberty and individual property, and the free opportunities of discussion upon every subject, became naturally the subject of eulogy amongst those who were awakening their countrymen to a sense of the benefits of national freedom. The time was past, when, as in the days of Louis XIV., the French regarded the institutions of the English with contempt, as fit only for merchants and shopkeepers, but unworthy of a nation of warriors, whose pride was in their subordination to their nobles, as that of the nobles consisted in obedience to their king. That prejudice had long passed away, and Frenchmen now admired, not without envy, the noble system of masculine freedom which had been consolidated by the successive efforts of so many patriots in so many ages. A sudden revulsion seemed to take place in their general feelings towards their neighbours, and France, who had so long dictated to all Europe in matters of fashion, seemed now herself disposed to borrow the more simple forms and fashions of her ancient rival. The spirit of imitating the English, was carried even to the verge of absurdity. Not only did Frenchmen of quality adopt the round hat and frock coat, which set etiquette at defiance—not only had they English carriages, dogs, and horses, but even English butlers were hired, that the wine, which was the growth of France, might be placed on the table with the grace peculiar to England. These were, indeed, the mere ebullitions of fashion carried to excess, but, like the foam on the crest of the billow, they argued the depth and strength of the wave beneath, and, insignificant in themselves, were formidable as evincing the contempt with which the French now regarded all those forms and usages, which had hitherto been thought peculiar to their own country. This principle of imitation rose to such extravagance, that it was happily termed the *Anglomania*.*

While the young French gallants were emulously employed in this mimicry of the English fashions, relinquishing the external signs of rank which always produce some effect on the vulgar, men of thought and reflection were engaged in analysing those principles of the British government, on which the national character has been formed, and which have afforded her the means of rising from so many reverses, and maintaining a sway among the kingdoms of Europe, so disproportioned to her population and extent.

To complete the conquest of English opinions, even in France herself, over those of French origin, came the consequences of the American War. Those true Frenchmen who disdained to borrow the sentiments of political freedom from England, might now derive them from a country with whom France could have no rivalry, but in whom, on the contrary, she recognized the enemy of the island, in policy or prejudice termed her own natural foe. The deep sympathy manifested by the French in the success of the American insurgents, though diametrically opposite to the interests of their government, or perhaps of the nation at large, was compounded of too many ingredients influencing all ranks, to be overcome or silenced by cold considerations of political prudence. The nobility, always eager of martial distinction, were in general desirous of war, and most of them, the pupils of the celebrated *Encyclopedie*, were doubly delighted to lend their swords to the cause of freedom. The statesmen ima-

* An instance is given, ludicrous in itself, but almost prophetic, when connected with subsequent events. A courtier, deeply infected with the fashion of the time, was riding beside the king's carriage at a full trot, without observing that his horse's heels threw the mud into the royal vehicle. "Vous me crottez, Monsieur," said the king. The horseman, considering the words were "Vous trottez," and that the prince complimented his equestrian performance, answered, "Oui, Sire, à l'Angloise." The good-humoured monarch drew up the glass, and only said to the gentleman in the carriage, "Voilà une Anglomanie bien forte!" Alas! the unhappy prince lived to see the example of England, in her most dismal period, followed to a much more formidable extent.

gined that they saw, in the success of the American insurgents, the total downfall of the English empire, or at least a far descent from that pinnacle of dignity which she had attained at the Peace of 1763, and they eagerly urged Louis XVI. to profit by the opportunity, hitherto sought in vain, of humbling a rival so formidable. In the courtly circles, and particularly in that which surrounded Marie Antoinette, the American deputation had the address or good fortune to become popular, by mingling in them with manners and sentiments entirely opposite to those of courts and courtiers, and exhibiting, amid the extremity of refinement, in dress, speech, and manners, a republican simplicity, rendered interesting both by the contrast, and by the talents which Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane evinced, not only in the business of diplomacy, but in the intercourse of society. Impelled by these and other combining causes, a despotic government, whose subjects were already thoroughly imbued with opinions hostile to its constitution in church and state, with a discontented people, and a revenue well nigh bankrupt, was thrust, as if by fatality, into a contest conducted upon principles most adverse to its own existence.

The King, almost alone, whether dreading the expense of a ruinous war, whether alarmed already at the progress of democratic principles, or whether desirous of observing good faith with England, considered that there ought to be a stronger motive for war, than barely the opportunity of waging it with success; the King, therefore, almost alone, opposed this great political error. It was not the only occasion in which, wiser than his counsellors, he nevertheless yielded up to their urgency opinions founded in unbiassed morality, and unpretending common sense. A good judgment, and a sound moral sense, were the principal attributes of this excellent prince, and happy it would have been had they been mingled with more confidence in himself, and a deeper distrust of others.

Other counsels prevailed over the private opinion of Louis—the war was commenced—successfully carried on, and victoriously concluded. We have seen that the French auxiliaries brought with them to America minds apt to receive, if not already* imbued with, those principles of freedom for which the colonies had taken up arms against the mother country, and it is not to be wondered if they returned to France strongly prepossessed in favour of a cause, for which they had encountered danger, and in which they had reaped honour.

The inferior officers of the French auxiliary army, chiefly men of birth, agreeably to the existing rules of the French service, belonged, most of them, to the class of country nobles, who, from causes already noticed, were far from being satisfied with the system which rendered their rise difficult, in the only profession which their prejudices, and those of France, permitted them to assume. The proportion of plebeians who had intruded themselves, by connivance and indirect means, into the military ranks, looked with eagerness to some change which should give a free and open career to their courage and their ambition, and were proportionally discontented with regulations which were recently adopted, calculated to render their rise in the army more difficult than before.† In these sentiments were united the whole of the non-commissioned officers, and the ranks of the common soldiery, all of whom, confiding in their own courage and fortune, now became indignant at those barriers which closed against them the road to military advancement, and to superior command. The

* By some young enthusiasts, the assumption of republican habits was carried to all the heights of revolutionary affectation and extravagance. Ségur mentions a young coxcomb named Mauduit, who already distinguished himself by renouncing the ordinary courtesies of life, and insisting on being called by his Christian and surname, without the usual addition of Monsieur.

† Plebeians formerly got into the army by obtaining the subscription of four men of noble birth, attesting their patrician descent; and such certificates, however false, could always be obtained for a small sum. But by a regulation of the Count Ségur, after the American war, candidates for the military profession were obliged to produce a certificate of noble birth from the king's genealogist, in addition to the attestations which were formerly held sufficient.

officers of superior rank, who derived their descent from the high noblesse, were chiefly young men of ambitious enterprize and warm imaginations, whom not only a love of honour, but an enthusiastic feeling of devotion to the new philosophy, and the political principles which it inculcated, had called to arms. Amongst these were Rochambeau, La Fayette, the Lameths, Chastellux, Ségur, and others of exalted rank, but of no less exalted feelings for the popular cause. They readily forgot, in the full current of their enthusiasm, that their own rank in society was endangered by the progress of popular opinions, or if they at all remembered that their interest was thus implicated, it was with the generous disinterestedness of youth, prompt to sacrifice to the public advantage whatever of selfish immunities was attached to their own condition.

The return of the French army from America, thus brought a strong body of auxiliaries to the popular and now prevalent opinions; and the French love of military glory, which had so long been the safeguard of the throne, became now intimately identified with that distinguished portion of the army which had been so lately and so successfully engaged in defending the claims of the people against the rights of an established government. Their laurels were green and newly gathered, while those which had been obtained in the cause of monarchy were of an ancient date, and tarnished by the reverses of the Seven Years' War. The reception of the returned soldiery and their leaders was proportionally enthusiastic; and it became soon evident, that when the eventful struggle betwixt the existing monarchy and its adversaries should commence, the latter were to have the support in sentiment, and probably in action, of that distinguished part of the army, which had of late maintained and recovered the military character of France. It was, accordingly, from its ranks that the Revolution derived many of its most formidable champions, and it was their example which detached a great proportion of the French soldiers from their natural allegiance to the sovereign, which had been for so many ages expressed in their war-cry of "*Vive le Roi*," and which was revived, though with an altered object, in that of "*Vive l'Empereur*."

There remains but to notice the other proximate cause of the Revolution, but which is so intimately connected with its rise and progress, that we cannot disjoin it from our brief review of the revolutionary movements to which it gave the first decisive impulse.

CHAPTER III.

Proximate Cause of the Revolution.—Deranged State of the Finances.—Reforms in the Royal Household.—System of Turgot and Neckar—Neckar's Exposition of the State of the Public Revenue.—The Red-Book.—Neckar displaced—Succeeded by Calonne.—General State of the Revenue.—Assembly of the Notables.—Calonne dismissed.—Archbishop of Sens Administrator of the Finances.—The King's Contest with the Parliament—Bed of Justice—Resistance of the Parliament and general Disorder in the Kingdom.—Vacillating Policy of the Minister—Royal Sitting—Scheme of forming a Cour Plénier—It proves ineffectual.—Archbishop of Sens retires, and is succeeded by Neckar—He resolves to convoke the States General.—Second Assembly of Notables previous to Convocation of the States.—Questions as to the Numbers of which the Tiers Etat should consist, and the Mode in which the Estates should deliberate.

WE have already compared the monarchy of France to an ancient building, which, however decayed by the wasting injuries of time, may long remain standing, from the mere adhesion of its parts, unless it is assailed by some sudden

and unexpected shock, the immediate violence of which completes the ruin which the lapse of ages had only prepared. Or if its materials have become dry and combustible, still they may long wait for the spark which is to awake a general conflagration. \ Thus, the monarchical government of France, notwithstanding the unsoundness of all its parts, might have for some time continued standing and unconsumed, nay, with timely and judicious repairs, might have been entire at this moment, had the state of the finances of the kingdom permitted the monarch to temporize with the existing discontents and the progress of new opinions, without increasing the taxes of a people already greatly overburthened, and now become fully sensible that these burthens were unequally imposed, and sometimes prodigally dispensed.

A government, like an individual, may be guilty of many acts, both of injustice and folly, with some chance of impunity, provided it possess wealth enough to command partizans and to silence opposition; and history shows us, that as, on the one hand, wealthy and money-saving monarchs have usually been able to render themselves most independent of their subjects, so, on the other, it is from needy princes, and when exchequers are empty, that the people have obtained grants favourable to freedom in exchange for their supplies. The period of pecuniary distress in a government, if it be that when the subjects are most exposed to oppression, is also the crisis in which they have the best chance of recovering their political rights.

It is in vain that the constitution of a despotic government endeavours, in its forms, to guard against the dangers of such conjunctures, by vesting in the sovereign the most complete and unbounded right to the property of his subjects. This doctrine, however ample in theory, cannot in practice be carried beyond certain bounds, without producing either privy conspiracy or open insurrection, being the violent symptoms of the outraged feelings and exhausted patience of the subject, which in absolute monarchies supply the want of all regular political checks upon the power of the crown. Whenever the point of human sufferance is exceeded, the despot must propitiate the wrath of an insurgent people with the head of his minister, or he may tremble for his own.*

In constitutions of a less determined despotical character, there almost always arises some power of check or control, however anomalous, which balances or counteracts the arbitrary exactions of the sovereign, instead of the actual resistance of the subjects, as at Fez or Constantinople. This was the case in France.

No constitution could have been more absolute in theory than that of France, for two hundred years past, in the matter of finance; but yet in practice there existed a power of control in the Parliaments, and particularly in that of Paris. These courts, though strictly speaking they were constituted only for the administration of justice, had forced themselves, or been forced by circumstances, into a certain degree of political power, which they exercised in control of the crown, in the imposition of new taxes. It was agreed on all hands, that the royal edicts, enforcing such new impositions, must be registered by the Parliaments; but while the ministers held the act of registering such edicts to be a deed purely ministerial, and the discharge of a function imposed by their official duty, the magistrates insisted, on the other hand, that they possessed the power of deliberating and remonstrating, nay, of refusing to register the royal edicts, and that unless so registered these warrants had no force or effect. The Parliaments exercised this power of control on various occasions; and as their interference was always on behalf of the subject, the practice, however anomalous, was sanctioned by public opinion; and, in the absence of all other representatives of the people, France naturally looked up to the magistrates as the

* When Buonaparte expressed much regret and anxiety on account of the assassination of the Emperor Paul, he was comforted by Fouché with words to the following effect:—"Que voulez vous enfin? C'est une mode de destitution propre à ce pais-là!"

protectors of her rights, and as the only power which could offer even the semblance of resistance to the arbitrary increase of the burthens of the state. These functionaries cannot be charged with carelessness or cowardice in the discharge of their duty; and as taxes increased and became at the same time less productive, the opposition of the Parliaments became more formidable. Louis XV. endeavoured to break their spirit by suppression of their court, and banishment of its members from Paris; but notwithstanding this temporary victory, he is said to have predicted that his successor might not come off from the renewed contest so successfully.

Louis XVI., with the plain well-meaning honesty which marked his character, restored the Parliaments to their constitutional powers immediately on his accession to the throne, having the generosity to regard their resistance to his grandfather as a merit rather than an offence. In the meanwhile, the revenue of the kingdom had fallen into a most disastrous condition. The continued and renewed expense of unsuccessful wars, the supplying the demands of a luxurious court, the gratifying hungry courtiers, and enriching needy favourites, had occasioned large deficits upon the public income of each successive year. The ministers, meanwhile, anxious to provide for the passing moment of their own administration, were satisfied to put off the evil day by borrowing money at heavy interest, and leasing out, in security of these loans, the various sources of revenue to the farmers-general. On their part, these financiers used the government as bankrupt prodigals are treated by usurious money-brokers, who, feeding their extravagance with the one hand, with the other wring out of their ruined fortunes the most unreasonable recompence for their advances. By a long succession of these ruinous loans, and the various rights granted to guarantee them, the whole finances of France appear to have fallen into total confusion, and presented an inextricable chaos to those who endeavoured to bring them into order. The farmers-general, therefore, however obnoxious to the people, who considered with justice that their overgrown fortunes were nourished by the life-blood of the community, continued to be essentially necessary to the state, the expenses of which they alone could find means of defraying;—thus supporting the government, although Mirabeau said with truth, it was only in the sense in which a rope supports a hanged man.

Louis XVI., fully sensible of the disastrous state of the public revenue, did all he could to contrive a remedy. He limited his personal expenses, and those of his household, with a rigour which approached to parsimony, and dimmed the necessary splendour of the throne. He abolished many pensions, and by doing so not only disobliged those who were deprived of the instant enjoyment of those gratuities, but lost the attachment of the much more numerous class of expectants, who served the court in the hope of obtaining similar gratifications in their turn.* Lastly, he dismissed a very large proportion of his household troops and body-guards, affording another subject of discontent to the nobles, out of whose families these corps were recruited, and destroying with his own hand a force devotedly attached to the royal person, and which, in the hour of popular fury, would have been a barrier of inappreciable value. Thus, it was the misfortune of this well-meaning prince, only to weaken his own cause and endanger his safety, by those sacrifices, intended to relieve the burthens of the people, and supply the wants of the state.

* Louis XV. had the arts if not the virtues of a monarch. He asked one of his ministers what he supposed might be the price of the carriage in which they were sitting. The minister, making a great allowance for the monarch's paying *en prince*, yet guessed within two-thirds less than the real sum. When the king named the actual price, the statesman exclaimed, but the monarch cut him short. "Do not attempt," he said, "to reform the expenses of my household. There are too many, and too great men, who have their share in that extortion, and to make a reformation would give too much discontent. No minister can attempt it with success or with safety." This is the picture of the waste attending a despotic government—the cup which is filled to the very brim cannot be lifted to the lips without wasting the contents.

The King adopted a broader and more effectual course of reform, by using the advice of upright and skilful ministers, to introduce, as far as possible, some degree of order into the French finances. Turgot, Malesherbes, and Neckar, were persons of unquestionable skill, of sound views, and undisputed integrity; and although the last-named minister finally sunk in public esteem, it was only because circumstances had excited such an extravagant opinion of his powers, as could not have been met and realized by those of the first financier who ever lived. These virtuous and patriotic statesmen did all in their power to keep afloat the vessel of the state, and prevent at least the increase of the deficit, which now arose yearly on the public accounts. They, and Neckar in particular, introduced economy and retrenchment into all departments of the revenue, restored the public credit without increasing the national burthens, and, by obtaining loans on reasonable terms, were fortunate enough to find funds for the immediate support of the American war, expensive as it was, without pressing on the patience of the people by new impositions. Could this state of matters have been supported for some years, opportunities might in that time have occurred for adapting the French mode of government to the new lights which the age afforded. Public opinion, joined to the beneficence of the sovereign, had already wrought several important and desirable changes. Many obnoxious and oppressive laws had been expressly abrogated, or tacitly suffered to become obsolete, and there never sat a king upon the French or any other throne, more willing than Louis XVI. to sacrifice his own personal interest and prerogative to whatever seemed to be the benefit of the state. Even at the very commencement of his reign, and when obeying only the dictates of his own beneficence, he reformed the penal code of France, which then savoured of the barbarous times in which it had originated—he abolished the use of torture—he restored to freedom those prisoners of state, the mournful inhabitants of the Bastille, and other fortresses, who had been the victims of his grandfather's jealousy—the compulsory labour called the *corvée*, levied from the peasantry, and one principal source of popular discontent, had been abolished in some provinces and modified in others—and while the police was under the regulation of the sage and virtuous Malesherbes, its arbitrary powers had been seldom so exercised as to become the subject of complaint. In short, the monarch partook the influence of public opinion along with his subjects, and there seemed just reason to hope, that, had times remained moderate, the monarchy of France might have been reformed instead of being destroyed.

Unhappily, convulsions of the state became from day to day more violent, and Louis XVI., who possessed the benevolence and good intentions of his ancestor, Henry IV., wanted his military talents, and his political firmness. In consequence of this deficiency, the King suffered himself to be distracted by a variety of counsels; and vacillating, as all must who act more from a general desire to do that which is right, than upon any determined and well-considered system, he placed his power and his character at the mercy of the changeful course of events, which firmness might have at least combated, if it could not control. But it is remarkable, that Louis resembled Charles I. of England more than any of his own ancestors, in a want of self-confidence, which led to frequent alterations of mind and changes of measures, as well as in a tendency to uxoriousness, which enabled both Henrietta Maria, and Marie Antoinette, to use a fatal influence upon their counsels. Both sovereigns fell under the same suspicion of being deceitful and insincere, when perhaps both, but certainly Louis, only changed his course of conduct from a change of his own opinion, or from suffering himself to be over-persuaded, and deferring to the sentiments of others.

Few monarchs of any country, certainly, have changed their ministry, and with their ministry their councils and measures, so often as Louis XVI.; and with this unhappy consequence, that he neither persevered in a firm and severe

course of government long enough to inspire respect, nor in a conciliatory and yielding policy for a sufficient time to propitiate regard and inspire confidence. It is with regret we notice this imperfection in a character otherwise so excellent; but it was one of the leading causes of the Revolution, that a prince, possessed of power too great to be either kept or resigned with safety, hesitated between the natural resolution to defend his hereditary prerogative, and the sense of justice which induced him to restore such part of it as had been usurped from the people by his ancestors. By adhering to the one course, he might have been the conqueror of the Revolution; by adopting the other, he had a chance to be its guide and governor; by hesitating between them, he became its victim.

It was in consequence of this vacillation of purpose that Louis, in 1781, sacrificed Turgot and Neckar to the intrigues of the court. These statesmen had formed a plan for new-modelling the financial part of the French monarchy, which, while it should gratify the people by admitting representatives on their part to some influence in the imposition of new taxes, might have released the King from the interference of the Parliaments, (whose office of remonstrance, although valuable as a shelter from despotism, was often arbitrarily, and even factiously exercised,) and have transferred to the direct representatives of the people that superintendence, which ought never to have been in other hands.

For this purpose the ministers proposed to institute, in the several provinces of France, convocations of a representative nature, one half of whom was to be chosen from the Commons, or Third Estate, and the other named by the Nobles and Clergy in equal proportions, and which assemblies, without having the right of rejecting the edicts imposing new taxes, were to apportion them amongst the subjects of their several provinces. This system contained in it much that was excellent, and might have opened the road for further improvements on the constitution; while, at the same time, it would probably, so early as 1781, have been received as a boon, by which the subjects were called to participate in the royal councils, rather than as a concession extracted from the weakness of the sovereign, or from his despair of his own resources. It afforded also, an opportunity peculiarly desirable in France, of forming the minds of the people to the discharge of public duty. The British nation owe much of the practical benefits of their constitution to the habits with which almost all men are trained to exercise some public right in head-courts, vestries, and other deliberative bodies, where their minds are habituated to the course of business, and accustomed to the manner in which it can be most regularly despatched. This advantage would have been supplied to the French by Neckar's scheme.

But with all the advantages which it promised, this plan of provincial assemblies miscarried, owing to the emulous opposition of the Parliament of Paris, who did not choose that any other body than their own, should be considered as the guardians of what remained in France of popular rights.

Another measure of Neckar was of more dubious policy. This was the printing and publishing of his Report to the Sovereign of the state of the revenues of France. The minister probably thought this display of candour, which, however proper in itself, was hitherto unknown in the French administration, might be useful to the King, whom it represented as acquiescing in public opinion, and appearing not only ready, but solicitous, to collect the sentiments of his subjects on the business of the state. Neckar might also deem the *Compte Rendu* a prudent measure on his own account, to secure the popular favour, and maintain himself by the public esteem against the influence of court intrigue. Or lastly, both these motives might be mingled with the natural vanity of showing the world that France enjoyed, in the person of Neckar, a minister bold enough to penetrate into the labyrinth of confusion and obscurity which had been thought inextricable by all his predecessors, and was at length enabled

to render to the sovereign and the people of France a detailed and balanced account of the state of their finances.

Neither did the result of the national balance-sheet appear so astounding as to require its being concealed as a state mystery. The deficit, or the balance, by which the expenses of government exceeded the revenue of the country, by no means indicated a desperate state of finance, or one which must either demand immense sacrifices, or otherwise lead to national bankruptcy. It did not greatly exceed the annual defalcation of two millions, a sum which, to a country so fertile as France, might even be termed trifling. At the same time, Neckar brought forward a variety of reductions and economical arrangements, by which he proposed to provide for this deficiency, without either incurring debt or burthening the subject with additional taxes.

But although this general exposure of the expenses of the state, this appeal from the government to the people, had the air of a frank and generous proceeding, and was, in fact, a step to the great constitutional point of establishing in the nation and its representatives the sole power of granting supplies, there may be doubt whether it was not rather too hastily resorted to. Those from whose eyes the cataract has been removed, are for some time deprived of light, and, in the end, it is supplied to them by limited degrees; but that glare which was at once poured on the nation of France, served to dazzle as many as it illuminated. The *Compte Rendu* was the general subject of conversation, not only in coffee-houses and public promenades, but in saloons and ladies' boudoirs, and amongst society better qualified to discuss the merits of the last comedy, or any other frivolity of the day. The very array of figures had something ominous and terrible in it, and the word *deficit* was used, like the name of Marlborough of old, to frighten children with.

To most it intimated the total bankruptcy of the nation, and prepared many to act with the selfish and short-sighted licence of sailors, who plunder the cargo of their own vessel in the act of shipwreck.

Others saw, in the account of expenses attached to the person and dignity of the prince, a wasteful expenditure, which in that hour of avowed necessity a nation might well dispense with. Men began to number the guards and household pomp of the sovereign and his court, as the daughters of Lear did the train of their father. The reduction already commenced might be carried, thought these provident persons, yet farther:—

“What needs he five-and-twenty, ten, or five?”

And no doubt some, even at this early period, arrived at the ultimate conclusion,

“What needs one?”

Besides the domestic and household expenses of the sovereign, which, so far as personal, were on the most moderate scale, the public mind was much more justly revolted at the large sum yearly squandered among needy courtiers and their dependants, or even less justifiably lavished upon those whose rank and fortune ought to have placed them far above adding to the burthens of the subjects. The King had endeavoured to abridge this list of gratuities and pensions, but the system of corruption which had prevailed for two centuries, was not to be abolished in an instant; the throne, already tottering, could not immediately be deprived of the band of stipendiary grandees whom it had so long maintained, and who afforded it their countenance in return, and it was perhaps impolitic to fix the attention of the public on a disclosure so peculiarly invidious, until the opportunity of correcting it should arrive;—it was like the disclosure of a wasting sore, useless and disgusting unless when shown to a surgeon, and for the purpose of cure. Yet, though the account rendered by the minister of the finances, while it passed from the hand of one idler to another, and occupied on sofas and toilettes the place of the latest novel, did doubtless engage giddy heads in vain and dangerous speculation, something was to be risked in order to pave the way

of regaining for the French subjects the right most essential to freemen, that of granting or refusing their own supplies. The publicity of the distressed state of the finances, induced a general conviction that the oppressive system of taxation, and that of approaching bankruptcy, which was a still greater evil, could only be removed or avoided by resorting to the nation itself, convoked in their ancient form of representation, which was called the States-General.

It was true that, through length of time, the nature and powers of this body were forgotten, if indeed they had ever been very thoroughly fixed: and it was also true that the constitution of the States-General of 1614, which was the last date of their being assembled, was not likely to suit a period when the country was so much changed, both in character and circumstances. The doubts concerning the composition of the medicine, and its probable effects, seldom abate the patient's confidence. All joined in desiring the convocation of this representative body, and all expected that such an assembly would be able to find some satisfactory remedy for the pressing evils of the state. The cry was general, and, as usual in such cases, few who joined in it knew exactly what it was they wanted.

Looking back on the period of 1780, with the advantage of our own experience, it is possible to see a chance, though perhaps a doubtful one, of avoiding the universal shipwreck which was fated to ensue. If the royal government, determining to gratify the general wish, had taken the initiative in conceding the great national measure as a boon flowing from the prince's pure good-will and love of his subjects, and if measures had been taken rapidly and decisively to secure seats in these bodies, but particularly in the Tiers Etat, to men known for their moderation and adherence to the monarchy, it seems probable that the Crown might have secured such an interest in a body of its own creation, as would have silenced the attempts of any heated spirits to hurry the kingdom into absolute revolution. The reverence paid to the throne for so many centuries, had yet all the influence of unassailed sanctity; the King was still the master of an army, commanded under him by his nobles, and as yet animated by the spirit of loyalty, which is the natural attribute of the military profession; the minds of men were not warmed at once, and wearied, by a fruitless and chicaning delay, which only showed the extreme indisposition of the court to grant what they had no means of ultimately refusing; nor had public opinion yet been agitated by the bold discussions of a thousand pamphleteers, who, under pretence of enlightening the people, prepossessed their minds with the most extreme ideas of the popular character of the representation of the Tiers Etat, and its superiority over every other power of the state. Ambitious and unscrupulous men would then hardly have had the time or boldness to form those audacious pretensions which their ancestors dreamed not of, and which the course of six or seven years of protracted expectation, and successive renewals of hope, succeeded by disappointment, enabled them to mature.

Such a fatal interval, however, was suffered to intervene, between the first idea of convoking the States-General, and the period when that measure became inevitable. Without this delay, the King, invested with all his royal prerogatives, and at the head of the military force, might have surrendered with a good grace such parts of his power as were inconsistent with the liberal opinions of the time, and such surrender must have been received as a grace, since it could not have been exacted as a sacrifice. The conduct of the government, in the interim, towards the nation whose representatives it was shortly to meet, resembled that of an insane person, who should by a hundred teasing and vexatious insults irritate into frenzy the lion, whose cage he was about to open, and to whose fury he must necessarily be exposed.

Neckar, whose undoubted honesty, as well as his republican candour, had rendered him highly popular, had, under the influence of the old intriguer Maupeou, been dismissed from his office as Minister of France, in 1781. The witty,

versatile, selfish, and cunning Maurepas had the art to hold his power till the last moment of his long life, and died at the moment when the knell of death was a summons to call him from impending ruin. He made, according to an expressive northern proverb, the "day and way alike long;" and died just about the period when the system of evasion and palliation, of usurious loans and lavish bounties, could scarce have served longer to save him from disgrace. Vergennes, who succeeded him, was, like himself, a courtier rather than a statesman; more studious to preserve his own power, by continuing the same system of partial expedients and temporary shifts, than willing to hazard the King's favour, or the popularity of his administration, by attempting any scheme of permanent utility or general reformation. Calonne, the Minister of Finance, who had succeeded to that office after the brief administrations of Fleury and d'Ormesson, called on by his duty to the most difficult and embarrassing branch of government, was possessed of a more comprehensive genius, and more determined courage, than his principal Vergennes. So early as the year 1784, the deficiency betwixt the receipts of the whole revenues of the state, and the expenditure, extended to six hundred and eighty-four millions of livres, in British money about equal to twenty-eight millions four hundred thousand pounds sterling; but then a certain large portion of this debt consisted in annuities granted by government, which were annually in the train of being extinguished by the death of the holders; and there was ample room for saving, in the mode of collecting the various taxes. So that large as the sum of deficit appeared, it could not have been very formidable, considering the resources of so rich a country; but it was necessary, that the pressure of new burdens, to be imposed at this exigence, should be equally divided amongst the orders of the state. The Third Estate, or Commons, had been exhausted under the weight of taxes, which fell upon them alone, and Calonne formed the bold and laudable design of compelling the Clergy and Nobles, hitherto exempted from taxation, to contribute their share to the revenues of the state.

This, however, was, in the present state of the public, too bold a scheme to be carried into execution without the support of something resembling a popular representation. At this crisis, again might Louis have summoned the States-general, with some chance of uniting their suffrages with the wishes of the Crown. The King would have found himself in a natural alliance with the Commons, in a plan to abridge those immunities, which the Clergy and Nobles possessed, to the prejudice of the Third Estate. He would thus, in the outset at least, have united the influence and interests of the Crown with those of the popular party, and established something like a balance in the representative body, in which the throne must have had considerable weight.

Apparently, Calonne and his principal Vergennes were afraid to take this manly and direct course, as indeed the ministers of an arbitrary monarch can rarely be supposed willing to call in the aid of a body of popular representatives. The ministers endeavoured, therefore, to supply the want of a body like the States-general, by summoning together an assembly of what was termed the Notables, or principal persons in the kingdom. This was in every sense an unadvised measure.* With something resembling the form of a great national council, the Notables had no right to represent the nation, neither did it come within their province to pass any resolution whatever. Their post was merely that of an extraordinary body of counsellors, who deliberated on any subject which the King might submit to their consideration, and were to express their opinion in answer to the sovereign's interrogatories; but an assembly, which could only start opinions and debate upon them, without coming to any effective or potential decision, was a fatal resource at a crisis when decision was peremptorily necessary, and when all vague and irrelevant discussion was, as at a

* They were summoned on 29th December, 1786, and met on 23d February of the subsequent year.

moment of national fermentation, to be cautiously avoided. Above all, there was this great error in having recourse to the Assembly of the Notables, that, consisting entirely of the privileged orders, the council was composed of the individuals most inimical to the equality of taxes, and most tenacious of those very immunities which were struck at by the scheme of the Minister of Finance.

Calonne found himself opposed at every point, and received from the Notables remonstrances instead of support and countenance. That Assembly censuring all his plans, and rejecting his proposals, he was in their presence like a rash necromancer, who has been indeed able to raise a demon, but is unequal to the task of guiding him when evoked. He was further weakened by the death of Vergennes, and finally obliged to resign his place and his country, a sacrifice at once to court intrigue and popular odium. Had this able but rash minister convoked the States-general instead of the Notables, he would have been at least sure of the support of the Third Estate, or Commons; and, allied with them, might have carried through so popular a scheme, as that which went to establish taxation upon a just and equal principle, affecting the rich as well as the poor, the proud prelate and wealthy noble, as well as the industrious cultivator of the soil.

Calonne having retired to England from popular hatred, his perilous office devolved upon the Archbishop of Sens, afterwards the Cardinal de Lomenie, who was raised to the painful pre-eminence* by the interest of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette, whose excellent qualities were connected with a spirit of state-intrigue proper to the sex in such elevated situations, which but too frequently thwarted or bore down the more candid intentions of her husband, and tended, though on her part unwittingly, to give his public measures, sometimes adopted on his own principles, and sometimes influenced by her intrigues and solicitations, an appearance of vacillation, and even of duplicity, which greatly injured them both in the public opinion. The new minister finding it as difficult to deal with the Assembly of Notables as his predecessor, the King finally dissolved that body, without having received from them either the countenance or good counsel which had been expected, thus realizing the opinion expressed by Voltaire concerning such convocations:

"De tous ces Etats l'effet le plus commun,
Est de voir tous nos maux, sans en soulager un."

After dismissal of the Notables, the minister adopted or recommended a line of conduct so fluctuating and indecisive, so violent at one time in support of the royal prerogative, and so pusillanimous when he encountered resistance from the newly-awakened spirit of liberty, that had he been bribed to render the Crown at once odious and contemptible, or to engage his master in a line of conduct which should irritate the courageous, and encourage the timid, among his dissatisfied subjects, the Archbishop of Sens could hardly, after the deepest thought, have adopted measures better adapted for such a purpose. As if determined to bring matters to an issue betwixt the King and the Parliament of Paris, he laid before the latter two new edicts for taxes, similar in most respects to those which had been recommended by his predecessor Calonne to the Notables. The Parliament refused to register these edicts, being the course which the minister ought to have expected. He then resolved upon a display of the royal prerogative in its most arbitrary and obnoxious form. A Bed of Justice, as it was termed, was held,† where the King, presiding in person over the Court of Parliament, commanded the edicts imposing certain new taxes to be registered in his own presence; thus, by an act of authority emanating directly from the sovereign, beating down the only species of opposition which the subjects, through any organ whatsoever, could offer to the increase of taxation.

* May, 1787.

† 6th August, 1787.

The Parliament yielded the semblance of a momentary obedience, but protested solemnly, that the edict having been registered solely by the royal command, and against their unanimous opinion, should not have the force of a law. They remonstrated also to the throne in terms of great freedom and energy, distinctly intimating, that they could not and would not be the passive instruments, through the medium of whom the public was to be loaded with new impositions; and they expressed, for the first time, in direct terms, the proposition, fraught with the fate of France, that neither the edicts of the King, nor the registration of those edicts by the Parliament, were sufficient to impose permanent burthens on the people; but that such taxation was competent to the States-general only.

In punishment of their undaunted defence of the popular cause, the Parliament was banished to Troyes; the government thus increasing the national discontent by the removal of the principal court of the kingdom, and by all the evils incident to a delay of public justice. The Provincial Parliaments supported the principles adopted by their brethren of Paris. The Chamber of Accounts, and the Court of Aids, the judicial establishments next in rank to that of the Parliament, also remonstrated against the taxes, and refused to enforce them. They were not enforced accordingly; and thus, for the first time, during two centuries at least, the royal authority of France being brought into direct collision with public opinion and resistance, was, by the energy of the subject, compelled to retrograde and yield ground. This was the first direct and immediate movement of that mighty Revolution, which afterwards rushed to its crisis like a rock rolling down a mountain. This was the first torch which was actually applied to the various combustibles which lay scattered through France, and which we have endeavoured to analyze. The flame soon spread into the provinces. The nobles of Brittany broke out into a kind of insurrection; the Parliament of Grenoble impugned by a solemn decree the legality of *lettres de cachet*. Strange and alarming fears,—wild and boundless hopes,—inconsistent rumours,—a vague expectation of impending events,—all contributed to agitate the public mind. The quick and mercurial tempers which chiefly distinguish the nation, were half maddened with suspense, while even the dull nature of the lowest and most degraded of the community felt the coming impulse of extraordinary changes, as cattle are observed to be disturbed before an approaching thunder-storm.

The minister could not sustain his courage in such a menacing conjuncture, yet unhappily attempted a show of resistance, instead of leaving the King to the influence of his own sound sense and excellent disposition, which always induced him to choose the means of conciliation. There was indeed but one choice, and it lay betwixt civil war or concession. A despot would have adopted the former course, and withdrawing from Paris, would have gathered around him the army still his own. A patriotic monarch (and such was Louis XVI. when exercising his own judgment) would have chosen the road of concession; yet his steps, even in retreating, would have been so firm, and his attitude so manly, that the people would not have ventured to ascribe to fear what flowed solely from a spirit of conciliation. But the conduct of the minister, or of those who directed his motions, was an alternation of irritating opposition to the public voice, and of ill-timed concession to its demands, which implied an understanding impaired by the perils of the conjuncture, and unequal alike to the task of avoiding them by concession, or resisting them with courage.

The King, indeed, recalled the Parliament of Paris from their exile, coming, at the same time, under an express engagement to convoke the States-general, and leading the subjects, of course, to suppose that the new imposts were to be left to their consideration. But, as if to irritate men's minds, by showing a desire to elude the execution of what had been promised, the minister ventured, in an evil hour, to hazard another experiment upon the firmness of their nerves,

and again to commit the dignity of the sovereign by bringing him personally to issue a command, which experience had shown the Parliament were previously resolved to disobey. By this new proceeding, the King was induced to hold what was called a Royal Sitting of the Parliament, which resembled in all its forms a Bed of Justice, except that it seems as if the commands of the monarch were esteemed less authoritative when so issued, than when they were, as on the former occasion, delivered in this last obnoxious assembly.

Thus, at less advantage than before, and, at all events, after the total failure of a former experiment, the King, arrayed in all the forms of his royalty, once more, and for the last time, convoked his Parliament in person; and again with his own voice commanded the court to register a royal edict for a loan of four hundred and twenty millions of francs, to be raised in the course of five years. This demand gave occasion to a debate which lasted nine hours, and was only closed by the King rising up, and issuing at length his positive and imperative orders that the loan should be registered. To the astonishment of the meeting, the first prince of the blood, the Duke of Orleans, arose, as if in reply, and demanded to know if they were assembled in a Bed of Justice or a Royal Sitting; and receiving for answer that the latter was the quality of the meeting, he entered a solemn protest against the proceedings.* Thus was the authority of the King once more brought in direct opposition to the assertors of the rights of the people, as if on purpose to show, in the face of the whole nation, that its terrors were only those of a phantom, whose shadowy bulk might overawe the timid, but could offer no real cause of fear when courageously opposed.

The minister did not, however, give way without such an ineffectual struggle, as at once showed the weakness of the royal authority, and the willingness to wield it with the despotic sway of former times. Two members of the Parliament of Paris were imprisoned in remote fortresses, and the Duke of Orleans was sent in exile to his estate.

A long and animated exchange of remonstrances followed betwixt the King and the Parliament, in which the former acknowledged his weakness, even by entering into the discussion of his prerogative, as well as by the concessions he found himself obliged to tender. Meantime, the Archbishop of Sens nourished the romantic idea of getting rid of these refractory courts entirely, and at the same time to evade the convocation of the States-general, substituting in their place the erection of a *Cour-plènière*, or ancient Feudal Court, composed of princes, peers, marshals of France, deputies from the provinces, and other distinguished persons, who should in future exercise all the higher and nobler duties of the Parliaments, thus reduced to their original and proper duties as courts of justice. But a court, or council of the ancient feudal times, with so slight an infusion of popular representation, could in no shape have accorded with the ideas which now generally prevailed; and so much was this felt to be the case, that many of the peers, and other persons nominated members of the *Cour-plènière*, declined the seats proposed to them, and the whole plan fell to the ground.

Meantime, violence succeeded to violence, and remonstrance to remonstrance. The Parliament of Paris, and all the provincial bodies of the same description, being suspended from their functions, and the course of regular justice of course interrupted, the spirit of revolt became general through the realm, and broke out in riots and insurrections of a formidable description; while at the same time, the inhabitants of the capital were observed to become dreadfully agitated.

There wanted not writers to fan the rising discontent; and what seems more singular, they were permitted to do so without interruption, notwithstanding the deepened jealousy with which free discussion was now regarded in France.

* These memorable events took place on 19th November, 1787.

Libels and satires of every description were publicly circulated, without an attempt on the part of the government to suppress the publications, or to punish their authors, although the most scandalous attacks on the royal family, and on the queen in particular, were dispersed along with these political effusions. It seemed as if the arm of power was paralyzed, and the bonds of authority which had so long fettered the French people were falling asunder of themselves; for the liberty of the press, so long unknown, was now openly assumed and exercised, without the government daring to interfere.

To conclude the picture, as if God and man had alike determined the fall of this ancient monarchy, a hurricane of most portentous and unusual character burst on the kingdom, and laying waste the promised harvest far and wide, showed to the terrified inhabitants the prospect at once of poverty and famine, added to those of national bankruptcy and a distracted government.

The latter evils seemed fast advancing; for the state of the finances became so utterly desperate, that Louis was under the necessity of stopping a large proportion of the treasury payments, and issuing bills for the deficiency. At this awful crisis, fearing for the King, and more for himself, the Archbishop of Sens retired from administration,* and left the monarch, while bankruptcy and famine threatened the kingdom, to manage as he might, amid the storms which the measures of the minister himself had provoked to the uttermost.

A new premier, and a total alteration of measures, were to be resorted to, while Neckar, the popular favourite, called to the helm of the state, regretted, with bitter anticipation of misfortune, the time which had been worse than wasted under the rule of the Archbishop, who had employed it in augmenting the enemies and diminishing the resources of the crown, and forcing the King on such measures as caused the royal authority to be generally regarded as the common enemy of all ranks of the kingdom. To redeem the royal pledge by convoking the States-general, seemed to Neckar the most fair as well as most politic proceeding; and indeed this afforded the only chance of once more reconciling the prince with the people, though it was now yielding that to a demand, which two years before would have been received as a boon.

We have already observed that the constitution of this Assembly of National Representatives was little understood, though the phrase was in the mouth of every one. It was to be the panacea to the disorders of the nation, yet men knew imperfectly the mode of composing this universal medicine, or the manner of its operation. Or rather, the people of France invoked the assistance of this national council, as they would have done that of a tutelary angel, with full confidence in his power and benevolence, though they neither knew the form in which he might appear, nor the nature of the miracles which he was to perform in their behalf. It has been strongly objected to Neckar, that he neglected, on the part of the crown, to take the initiative line of conduct on this important occasion, and it has been urged that it was the minister's duty, without making any question, or permitting any doubt, to assume that mode of convening the States, and regulating them when assembled, which should best tend to secure the tottering influence of his master. But Neckar probably thought the time was past in which this power might have been assumed by the crown without exciting jealousy or opposition. The royal authority, he might recollect, had been of late years repeatedly strained, until it had repeatedly given way, and the issue, first of the Bed of Justice, and then of the Royal Sitting, was sufficient to show that words of authority would be wasted in vain upon disobedient ears, and might only excite a resistance which would prove its own lack of power. It was, therefore, advisable not to trust to the unaided exercise of prerogative, but to strengthen instead the regulations which might be adopted

* 25th August, 1788. The Archbishop fled to Italy with great expedition after he had given in his resignation to his unfortunate sovereign.

for the constitution of the States-general, by the approbation of some public body independent of the King and his ministers. And with this purpose, Neckar convened a second meeting of the Notables,* and laid before them, for their consideration, his plan for the constitution of the States-general.

There were two great points submitted to this body, concerning the constitution of the States general. I. In what proportion the deputies of the Three Estates should be represented? II. Whether, when assembled, the Nobles, Clergy, and Third Estate, or Commons, should act separately as distinct chambers, or sit and vote as one united body?

Neckar, a minister of an honest and candid disposition, a republican also, and therefore on principle a respecter of public opinion, unhappily did not recollect, that to be well-formed and accurate, public opinion should be founded on the authority of men of talents and integrity; and that the popular mind must be pre-occupied by arguments of a sound and virtuous tendency, else the enemy will sow tares, and the public will receive it in the absence of more wholesome grain. Perhaps also, this minister found himself less in his element when treating of state affairs, than while acting in his proper capacity as a financier. However that may be, Neckar's conduct resembled that of an unresolved general, who directs his movements by the report of a council of war. He did not sufficiently perceive the necessity that the measures to be taken should originate with himself rather than arise from the suggestion of others, and did not, therefore, avail himself of his situation and high popularity, to recommend such general preliminary arrangements as might preserve the influence of the crown in the States-general, without encroaching on the rights of the subject. The silence of Neckar leaving all in doubt, and open to discussion, those arguments had most weight with the public which ascribed most importance to the Third Estate. The talents of the Nobles and Clergy might be considered as having been already in vain appealed to in the two sessions of the Notables, an assembly composed chiefly out of the privileged classes, and whose advice and opinion had been given without producing any corresponding good effect. The Parliament had declared themselves incompetent to the measures necessary for the exigencies of the kingdom. The course adopted by the King indicated doubt and uncertainty, if not incapacity. The Tiers Etat, therefore, was the body of counsellors to whom the nation looked at this critical conjuncture.

"What is the Tiers Etat?" formed the title of a pamphlet by the Abbé Sieyes; and the answer returned by the author was such as augmented all the magnificent ideas already floating in men's minds concerning the importance of this order. "The Tiers Etat," said he, "comprehends the whole nation of France, excepting only the Nobles and Clergy." This view of the matter was so far successful, that the Notables recommended that the Commons, or Third Estate, should have a body of representatives equal to those of the Nobles and the Clergy united, and should thus form, in point of relative numbers, the moiety of the whole delegates.

This, however, would have been comparatively of small importance, had it been determined that the Three Estates were to sit, deliberate, and vote, not as an united body, but in three several chambers.

Neckar conceded to the Tiers Etat the right of double representation, but seemed prepared to maintain the ancient order of debating and voting by separate chambers. The crown had been already worsted by the rising spirit of the country in every attempt which it had made to stand through its own unassisted strength; and torn as the bodies of the clergy and nobles were by internal dissensions, and weakened by the degree of popular odium with which they were loaded, it would have required an artful consolidation of their force,

and an intimate union betwixt them and the crown, to maintain a balance against the popular claims of the Commons, likely to be at once so boldly urged by themselves, and so favourably viewed by the nation. All this was, however, left, in a great measure, to accident, while every chance was against its being arranged in the way most advantageous to the monarchy.

The minister ought also in policy to have paved the way, for securing a party in the Third Estate itself, which should bear some character of royalism. This might doubtless have been done by the usual ministerial arts of influencing elections, or gaining over to the crown-interests some of the many men of talents, who, determined to raise themselves in this new world, had not yet settled to which side they were to give their support. But Neckar, less acquainted with men than with mathematics, imagined that every member had intelligence enough to see the measures best calculated for the public good, and virtue enough to follow them faithfully and exclusively. It was in vain that the Marquis de Bouillé pointed out the dangers arising from the constitution assigned to the States-general, and insisted that the minister was arming the popular part of the nation against the two privileged orders, and that the latter would soon experience the effects of their hatred, animated by self-interest and vanity, the most active passions of mankind. Neckar calmly replied, that there was a necessary reliance to be placed on the virtues of the human heart;—the maxim of a worthy man, but not of an enlightened statesman,* who has but too much reason to know how often both the virtues and the prudence of human nature are surmounted by its prejudices and passions.

It was in this state of doubt, and total want of preparation, that the King was to meet the representatives of the people, whose elections had been trusted entirely to chance, without even an attempt to influence them in favour of the most eligible persons. Yet surely the Crown, hitherto almost the sole acknowledged authority in France, should have been provided with supporters in the new authority which was to be assembled. At least the minister might have been prepared with some system or plan of proceeding, upon which this most important convention was to conduct its deliberations; but there was not even an attempt to take up the reins which were floating on the necks of those who were for the first time harnessed to the chariot of the State. All was expectation, mere vague and unauthorized hope, that in this multitude of counsellors there would be found safety.†

Hitherto we have described the silent and smooth, but swift and powerful stream of innovation, as it rolled on to the edge of the sheer precipice. We are now to view the precipitate tumult and terrors of the cataract.

* See *Memoires de Bouillé*. Madame de Staël herself admits this deficiency in the character of a father, of whom she was justly proud.—“Se fiant trop, il faut l'avouer, à l'empire de la raison.”—*Considerations sur la Revolution*, vol. I. p. 171.

† A calembourg of the period presaged a different result.—“So numerous a concourse of state-physicians assembled to consult for the weal of the nation, argued,” it was said, “the imminent danger and approaching death of the patient.”

CHAPTER IV.

Meeting of the States-General.—Predominant Influence of the Tiers Etat—Property not represented sufficiently in that Body—General Character of the Members.—Disposition of the Estate of the Nobles—And of the Clergy.—Plan of forming the Three Estates into Two Houses—Its Advantages—It fails.—The Clergy unite with the Tiers Etat, which assumes the Title of the National Assembly.—They assume the Task of Legislation, and declare all former Fiscal Regulations illegal.—They assert their Determination to continue their Sessions.—Royal Sitting—Terminates in the Triumph of the Assembly.—Parties in that Body—Mounier—Constitutionalists—Republicans—Jacobins—Orleans.

THE Estates-general of France met at Versailles on the 5th May, 1789, and that was indisputably the first day of the Revolution. The Abbé Sieyès, in a pamphlet which we have mentioned, had already asked, “What was the Third Estate?—It was *the whole nation*. What had it been hitherto in a political light?—Nothing. What was it about to become presently?—Something.” Had the last answer been *Everything*, it would have been nearer the truth, for it soon appeared that this Third Estate, which, in the year 1614, the Nobles had refused to acknowledge even as a younger brother* of their order, was now, like the rod of the prophet, to swallow up all those who affected to share its power. Even amid the pageantry with which the ceremonial of the first sitting abounded, it was clearly visible that the wishes, hopes, and interest of the public, were exclusively fixed upon the representatives of the Commons. The rich garments and floating plumes of the nobility, and the reverend robes of the clergy, had nothing to fix the public eye; their sounding and emphatic titles had nothing to win the ear; the recollection of the high feats of the one, and long sanctified characters of the other order, had nothing to influence the mind of the spectators. All eyes were turned on the members of the Third Estate, in a plebeian and humble costume, corresponding to their lowly birth and occupation, as the only portion of the assembly from whom they looked for the lights and the counsels which the time demanded.

It would be absurd to assert, that the body which thus engrossed the national attention was devoid of talents to deserve it. On the contrary, the Tiers Etat contained a large proportion of the learning, the intelligence, and the eloquence of the kingdom; but unhappily it was composed of men of theory rather than of practice, men more prepared to change than to preserve or repair; and, above all, of men, who, generally speaking, were not directly concerned in the preservation of peace and order, by possessing a large property in the country.

The due proportion in which talents and property are represented in the British House of Commons, is perhaps the best assurance for the stability of the constitution. Men of talents, bold, enterprising, eager for distinction, and ambitious of power, suffer no opportunity to escape of recommending such measures as may improve the general system, and raise to distinction those by whom they are proposed; while men of substance, desirous of preserving the property which they possess, are scrupulous in scrutinizing every new measure, and steady in rejecting such as are not accompanied with the most certain prospect of advantage to the state. Talent, eager and active, desires the means of employment; Property, cautious, doubtful, jealous of innovation, acts as a regulator rather than an impulse on the machine, by preventing its moving either too rapidly, or

* The Baron de Senneci, when the Estates of the Kingdom were compared to three brethren, of which the Tiers Etat was youngest, declared that the Commons of France had no title to arrogate such a relationship with the Nobles, to whom they were so far inferior in blood, and in estimation.

changing too suddenly. The over-caution of those by whom property is represented may sometimes, indeed, delay a projected improvement, but much more frequently impedes a rash and hazardous experiment. Looking back on the parliamentary history of two centuries, it is easy to see how much practical wisdom has been derived from the influence exercised by those members called Country Gentlemen, who, unambitious of distinguishing themselves by their eloquence, and undesirous of mingling in the ordinary debates of the house, make their sound and unsophisticated good sense heard and understood upon every crisis of importance, in a manner alike respected by the ministry and the opposition of the day,—by the professed statesmen of the house, whose daily business is legislation, and whose thoughts, in some instances, are devoted to public affairs, because they have none of their own much worth looking after. In this great and most important characteristic of representation, the *Tiers Etat* of France was necessarily deficient; in fact, the part of the French constitution, which, without exactly corresponding to the country gentlemen of England, most nearly resembled them, was a proportion of the Rural Noblesse of France, who were represented amongst the Estate of the Nobility. An edict, detaching these rural proprietors, and perhaps the inferior clergy, from their proper orders, and including their representatives in that of the *Tiers Etat*, would have infused into the latter assembly a proportional regard for the rights of landholders, whether lay or clerical; and as they must have had a voice in those anatomical experiments, of which their property was about to become the subject, it may be supposed they would have resisted the application of the scalpel, excepting when it was unavoidably necessary. Instead of which, both the nobles and clergy came soon to be placed on the anatomical table at the mercy of each state-quack, who, having no interest in their sufferings, thought them excellent subjects on which to exemplify some favourite hypothesis.

While owners of extensive landed property were in a great measure excluded from the representation of the Third Estate, its ranks were filled from those classes which seek novelties in theory, and which are in the habit of profiting by them in practice. There were professed men of letters called thither, as they hoped and expected, to realize theories, for the greater part inconsistent with the present state of things, in which, to use one of their own choicest common-places,—“Mind had not yet acquired its due rank.” There were many of the inferior ranks of the law; for, unhappily, in this profession also the graver and more enlightened members were called by their rank to the Estate of the Noblesse. To these were united churchmen without livings, and physicians without patients; men, whose education generally makes them important in the humble society in which they move, and who are proportionally presumptuous and conceited of their own powers, when advanced into that which is superior to their usual walk. There were many bankers also speculators in politics, as in their natural employment of stock-jobbing; and there were intermingled with the classes we have noticed some individual nobles, expelled from their own ranks for want of character, who, like the dissolute Mirabeau, a moral monster for talents and want of principle, menaced, from the station which they had assumed, the rights of the class from which they had been expelled, and like deserters of every kind were willing to guide the foes to whom they had fled, into the intrenchments of the friends whom they had forsaken, or by whom they had been exiled. There were also mixed with these perilous elements many individuals, not only endowed with talents and integrity, but possessing a respectable proportion of sound sense and judgment; but who unfortunately aided less to counteract the revolutionary tendency, than to justify it by argument or dignify it by example. From the very beginning, the *Tiers Etat* evinced a determined purpose to annihilate in consequence if not in rank, the other two orders of the state, and to engross the whole power into their own hands.

It must be allowed to the Commons, that the Noblesse had possessed themselves of a paramount superiority over the middle class, totally inconsistent with the just degree of consideration due to their fellow-subjects, and irreconcilable with the spirit of enlightened times. They enjoyed many privileges which were humiliating to the rest of the nation, and others that were grossly unjust, among which must be reckoned their immunities from taxation. Assembled as an Estate of the Kingdom, they felt the *esprit-de-corps*, and, attached to the privileges of their order, showed little readiness to make the sacrifices which the times demanded, though at the risk of having what they refused to grant, forcibly wrested from them. They were publicly and imprudently tenacious, when, both on principle and in policy, they should have been compliant and accommodating—for their own sake, as well as that of the sovereign. Yet let us be just to that gallant and unfortunate body of men. They possessed the courage, if not the skill or strength of their ancestors, and while we blame the violence with which they clung to useless and antiquated privileges, let us remember that these were a part of their inheritance, which no man renounces willingly, and no man of spirit yields up to threats. If they erred in not adopting from the beginning a spirit of conciliation and concession, no body of men ever suffered so cruelly for hesitating to obey a summons, which called them to acts of such unusual self-denial.

The Clergy were no less tenacious of the privileges of the church, than the Noblesse of their peculiar feudal immunities. It had been already plainly intimated, that the property of the clerical orders ought to be subject, as well as all other species of property, to the exigencies of the state; and the philosophical opinions which had impugned their principles of faith, and rendered their persons ridiculous instead of reverend, would, it was to be feared, induce those by whom they were entertained, to extend their views to a general seizure of the whole, instead of a part, of the church's wealth.

Both the first and second Estates, therefore, kept aloof, moved by the manner in which the private interests of each stood committed, and both endeavoured to avert the coming storm, by retarding the deliberations of the States-general. They were particularly desirous to secure their individual importance as distinct orders, and appealed to ancient practice and the usage of the year 1614, by which the three several estates sat and voted in three separate bodies. But the Tiers Etat, who, from the beginning, felt their own strength, were determined to choose that mode of procedure by which their force should be augmented and consolidated. The double representation had rendered them equal in numbers to both the other bodies, and as they were sure of some interest among the inferior Noblesse, and a very considerable party amongst the lower Clergy, the assistance of these two minorities, added to their own numbers, must necessarily give them the superiority in every vote, providing the three chambers could be united into one.

On the other hand, the Clergy and Nobles saw that an union of this nature would place all their privileges and property at the mercy of the Commons, whom the union of the chambers in one assembly would invest with an overwhelming majority in that convocation. They had no reason to expect that this power, if once acquired, would be used with moderation, for not only had their actually obnoxious privileges been assailed by every battery of reason and of ridicule, but the records of former ages had been ransacked for ridiculous absurdities and detestable cruelties of the possessors of feudal power, all which were imputed to the present privileged classes, and mingled with many fictions of unutterable horror, devised on purpose to give a yet darker colouring to the system which it was their object to destroy.* Every motive, therefore, of self-

* It was, for example, gravely stated, that a seigneur of a certain province possessed a feudal right to put two of his vassals to death upon his return from hunting, and to rip their bellies open, and plunge his feet into their entrails to warm them!

interest and self-preservation, induced the two first chambers, aware of the possession which the third had obtained over the public mind, to maintain, if possible, the specific individuality of their separate classes, and use the right hitherto supposed to be vested in them, of protecting their own interests by their own separate votes, as distinct bodies.

Others, with a deeper view, and on less selfish reasoning, saw much hazard in amalgamating the whole force of the state, saving that which remained in the crown, into one powerful body, subject to all the hasty impulses to which popular assemblies lie exposed, as lakes to the wind, and in placing the person and authority of the king in solitary and diametrical opposition to what must necessarily, in moments of enthusiasm, appear to be the will of the whole people. Such statesmen would have preferred retaining an intermediate check upon the popular counsels of the *Tiers Etat* by the other two chambers, which might, as in England, have been united into one, and would have presented an imposing front, both in point of wealth and property, and through the respect which, excepting under the influence of popular emotion, the people, in spite of themselves, cannot help entertaining for birth and rank. Such a body, providing the stormy temper of the times had admitted of its foundations being laid sufficiently strong, would have served as a break-water betwixt the throne and the stream-tide of popular opinion; and the monarch would have been spared the painful and perilous task of opposing himself personally, directly, and without screen, or protection of any kind, to the democratical part of the constitution. Above all, by means of such an Upper House, time would have been obtained for reviewing more coolly those measures, which might have passed hastily through the assembly of Popular Representatives. It is observed in the history of innovation, that the indirect and unforeseen consequences of every great change of an existing system, are more numerous and extensive than those which had been foreseen and calculated upon, whether by those who advocated, or those who opposed the alteration. The advantages of a constitution, in which each measure of legislation must necessarily be twice deliberately argued by separate senates, acting under different impressions, and interposing, at the same time, a salutary delay, during which heats may subside, and erroneous views be corrected, requires no further illustration.

It must be owned, nevertheless, that there existed the greatest difficulty in any attempt which might have been made, to give weight to the Nobles as a separate chamber. The community at large looked to reforms deeply affecting the immunities of the privileged classes, as the most obvious means for the regeneration of the kingdom at large, and must have seen with jealousy an institution like an Upper House, which placed the parties who were principally to suffer these changes in a condition to impede, or altogether prevent them. It was naturally to be expected, that the Clergy and Nobles, united in an Upper House, must have become somewhat partial judges in the question of retrenching and limiting their own exclusive privileges; and, besides the ill-will which the Commons bore them as the possessors and assertors of rights infringing on the liberties of the people, it might be justly apprehended that, if the scourge destined for them were placed in their own hand, they might use it with the chary moderation of the squire in the romance of Cervantes. There would also have been reason to doubt that, when the nation was so much divided by factions, two Houses, so different in character and composition, could hardly have been brought to act with firmness and liberality towards each other,—that the one would have been ever scheming for the recovery of their full privileges, supposing they had been obliged to surrender a part of them, while the other would still look forward to the accomplishment of an entirely democratical revolution. In this way, the checks which ought to have acted merely to restrain the violence of either party, might operate as the means of oversetting the constitution which they were intended to preserve.

Still, it must be observed, that while the King retained any portion of authority, he might, with the countenance of the supposed Upper Chamber, or Senate, have balanced the progress of democracy. Difficult as the task might be, an attempt towards it ought to have been made. But, unhappily, the King's ear was successively occupied by two sets of advisers, one of whom counselled him to surrender every thing to the humour of the reformers of the state, while the other urged him to resist their most reasonable wishes;—without considering that he had to deal with those, who had the power to take by force what was refused to petition. Mounier and Malouet advocated the establishment of two chambers in the *Tiers Etat*, and Neckar was certainly favourable to some plan of the kind; but the Noblesse thought it called upon them for too great a sacrifice of their privileges, though it promised to ensure what remained, while the democratical part of the *Tiers Etat* opposed it obstinately, as tending to arrest the march of the revolutionary impulse.

Five or six weeks elapsed in useless debates concerning the form in which the Estates should vote; during which period the *Tiers Etat* showed, by their boldness and decision, that they knew the advantage which they held, and were sensible that the other bodies, if they meant to retain the influence of their situation in any shape, must unite with them, on the principle according to which smaller drops of water are attracted by the larger. This came to pass accordingly. The *Tiers Etat* were joined by the whole body of inferior clergy, and by some of the nobles, and on 17th June, 1789, proceeded to constitute themselves a legislative body, exclusively competent in itself to the entire province of legislation; and, renouncing the name of the Third Estate, which reminded men they were only one out of three bodies, they adopted that of the National Assembly, and avowed themselves, not merely the third branch of the representative body, but the sole representatives of the people of France, nay, the people themselves, wielding in person the whole gigantic powers of the realm. They now claimed the character of a constituent body, no longer limited to the task of merely requiring a redress of grievances, for which they had been originally appointed, but warranted to destroy and rebuild whatever they thought proper in the constitution of the state. It is not easy, on any ordinary principle, to see how a representation, convoked for a certain purpose, and with certain limited powers, should thus essentially alter their own character, and set themselves in such a different relation to the crown and the nation, from that to which their commissions restricted them; but the National Assembly were well aware, that, in extending their powers far beyond the terms of these commissions, they only fulfilled the wishes of their constituents, and that, in assuming to themselves so ample an authority, they would be supported by the whole nation, excepting the privileged orders.

The National Assembly proceeded to exercise their power with the same audacity which they had shown in assuming it. They passed a sweeping decree, by which they declared all the existing taxes to be illegal impositions, the collection of which they sanctioned only for the present, and as an interim arrangement, until they should have time to establish the financial regulations of the state upon an equal and permanent footing.

The King, acting under the advice of Neckar, and fulfilling the promise made on his part by the Archbishop of Sens, his former minister, had, as we have seen, assembled the States-general; but he was not prepared for the change of the Third Estate into the National Assembly, and for the pretensions which it asserted in the latter character. Terrified, and it was little wonder, at the sudden rise of this gigantic and all-overshadowing fabric, Louis became inclined to listen to those who counselled him to combat this new and formidable authority, by opposing to it the weight of royal power; to be exercised, however, with such attention to the newly-asserted popular opinions, and with such ample surrender of the obnoxious part of the royal prerogative, as might gratify

the rising spirit of freedom. For this purpose a Royal Sitting was appointed, at which the King in person was to meet the Three Estates of his kingdom, and propose a scheme which, it was hoped, might unite all parties, and tranquillize all minds. The name and form of this *Seance Royale* was perhaps not well chosen, as being too nearly allied to those of a Bed of Justice, in which the King was accustomed to exercise imperative authority over the Parliament; and the proceeding was calculated to awaken recollection of the highly unpopular Royal Sitting of the 19th November, 1787, the displacing of Necker, and the banishment of the Duke of Orleans.

But, as if this had not been sufficient, an unhappy accident, which almost resembled a fatality, deranged this project, destroyed all the grace which might, on the King's part, have attended the measure, and in place of it, threw the odium upon the court of having indirectly attempted the forcible dissolution of the Assembly, while it invested the members of that body with the popular character of steady patriots, whose union, courage, and presence of mind, had foiled the stroke of authority which had been aimed at their existence.

The Hall of the Commons was fixed upon for the purposes of the Royal Sitting, as the largest of the three which were occupied by the Three Estates, and workmen were employed in making the necessary arrangements and alterations. These alterations were imprudently commenced* before holding any communication on the subject with the National Assembly; and it was simply notified to their president, Bailli, by the master of the royal ceremonies, that the King had suspended the meeting of the Assembly until the Royal Sitting should have taken place. • Bailli, the president, well known afterwards by his tragical fate, refused to attend to an order so intimated, and the members of Assembly, upon resorting to their ordinary place of meeting, found it full of workmen, and guarded by soldiers. This led to one of the most extraordinary scenes of the Revolution.

The representatives of the nation, thus expelled by armed guards from their proper place of assemblage, found refuge in a common Tennis-court, while a thunder-storm, emblem of the moral tempest which raged on the earth, poured down its terrors from the heavens. It was thus that, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and with the wretched accommodations which such a place afforded, the members of Assembly took, and attested by their respective signatures, a solemn oath, to continue their sittings until the constitution of the country should be fixed on a solid basis. The scene was of a kind to make the deepest impression both on the actors and the spectators; although, looking back at the distance of so many years, we are tempted to ask at what period the National Assembly would have been dissolved, had they adhered literally to their celebrated oath? But the conduct of the government was in every respect worthy of censure. The probability of this extraordinary occurrence might easily have been foreseen. If mere want of consideration gave rise to it, the king's ministers were most culpably careless; if the closing of the hall, and suspending of the sittings of the Assembly, was intended by way of experiment upon its temper and patience, it was an act of madness, equal to that of irritating an already exasperated lion. Be this, however, as it may, the conduct of the court had the worst possible effect on the public mind, and prepared them to view with dislike and suspicion all propositions emanating from the throne; while the magnanimous firmness and unanimity of the Assembly seemed that of men determined to undergo martyrdom, rather than desert the assertion of their own rights, and those of the people.

At the Royal Sitting, which took place three days after the vow of the Tennis-court, a plan was proposed by the King, offering such security for the liberty of the subject, as would a year before have been received with grateful rapture;

* 20th June, 1789.

but it was the unhappy fate of Louis XVI. neither to recede nor advance at the fortunate moment. Happy would it have been for him, for France, and for Europe, if the science of Astrology, once so much respected, had in reality afforded the means of selecting lucky days. Few of his were marked with a white stone.

By the scheme which he proposed, the King renounced the power of taxation, and the right of borrowing money, except to a trifling extent, without assent of the States-general; he invited the Assembly to form a plan for regulating *lettres de cachet*, and acknowledged the personal freedom of the subject; he provided for the liberty of the press, but not without a recommendation that some check should be placed upon its licence; and he remitted to the States, as the proper authority, the abolition of the *gabelle*, and other unequal or oppressive taxes.

But all these boons availed nothing, and seemed to the people and their representatives, but a tardy and ungracious mode of resigning rights which the crown had long usurped, and only now restored when they were on the point of being wrested from its gripe. In addition to this, offence was taken at the tone and terms adopted in the royal address. The members of the Assembly conceived, that the expression of the royal will was brought forward in too imperative a form. They were offended that the King should have recommended the exclusion of spectators from the sittings of the Assembly; and much displeasure was occasioned by his declaring, thus late, their deliberations and decrees on the subject of taxes illegal. But the discontent was summed up and raised to the height by the concluding article of the royal address, in which, notwithstanding their late declarations, and oath not to break up their sittings until they had completed a constitution for France, the King presumed, by his own sole authority, to dissolve the Estates. To conclude, Neckar, upon whom alone among the ministers the popular party reposed confidence, had absented himself from the Royal Sitting, and thereby intimated his discontent with the scheme proposed.

This plan of a constitutional reformation was received with great applause by the Clergy and the Nobles, while the Third Estate listened in sullen silence. They knew little of the human mind, who supposed that the display of prerogative which had been so often successfully resisted, could influence such a body, or induce them to descend from the station of power which they had gained, and to render themselves ridiculous by rescinding the vow which they had so lately taken.

The King having, by his own proper authority, dissolved the Assembly, left the hall, followed by the Nobles and part of the Clergy; but the remaining members, who had remained silent and sullen, immediately resumed their sitting. The King, supposing him resolute to assert the prerogative which his own voice had but just claimed, had no alternative but that of expelling them by force, and thus supporting his order for dissolution of the Assembly; but, always halting between two opinions, Louis employed no rougher means of removing them than a gentle summons to disperse, intimated by the royal master of ceremonies. To this officer, not certainly the most formidable satellite of arbitrary power, Mirabeau replied with energetic determination,—“Slave! return to thy master, and tell him, that his bayonets alone can drive from their post the representatives of the people.”

The Assembly then proceeded to pass a decree, that they adhered to their oath taken in the Tennis-court, while by another they declared that their own persons were inviolable; and that whosoever should attempt to execute any restraint or violence upon a representative of the people, should be thereby guilty of the crime of high treason against the nation.

Their firmness, joined to the inviolability with which they had invested themselves, and the commotions which had broken out at Paris compelled the King

to give way, and renounce his purpose of dissolving the States, which continued their sittings under their new title of the National Assembly; while at different intervals, and by different manœuvres, the Chambers of the Clergy and Nobles were united with them, or, more properly, were merged and absorbed in one general body. Had that Assembly been universally as pure in its intentions as we verily believe to have been the case with many or most of its members, the French government, now lying dead at their feet, might, like the clay of Prometheus, have received new animation from their hand.

But the National Assembly, though almost unanimous in resisting the authority of the crown, and in opposing the claims of the privileged classes, was much divided respecting ulterior views, and carried in its bosom the seeds of internal dissension, and the jarring elements of at least four parties, which had afterwards their successive entrance and exit on the revolutionary stage; or rather one followed the other like successive billows, each obliterating and destroying the marks its predecessor had left on the beach.

The FIRST and most practical division of these legislators, was the class headed by Mounier, one of the wisest, as well as one of the best and worthiest men in France, by Malouet and others. They were patrons of a scheme at which we have already hinted, and thought France ought to look for some of the institutions favourable to freedom, to England, whose freedom had flourished so long. To transplant the British oak, with all its contorted branches and extended roots, would have been a fruitless attempt, but the infant tree of liberty might have been taught to grow after the same fashion. Modern France, like England of old, might have retained such of her own ancient laws, forms, or regulations, as still were regarded by the nation with any portion of respect, intermingling them with such additions and alterations as were required by the liberal spirit of modern times, and the whole might have been formed on the principles of British freedom. The nation might thus, in building its own bulwarks, have profited by the plan of those which had so long resisted the tempest. It is true, the French legislature could not have promised themselves, by the adoption of this course, to form at once a perfect and entire system; but they might have secured the personal freedom of the subject, the trial by jury, the liberty of the press, and the right of granting or withholding the supplies necessary for conducting the state,—of itself the strongest of all guarantees for national freedom, and that of which, when once vested in their own representatives, the people will never permit them to be deprived. They might have adopted also other checks, balances, and controls, essential to the permanence of a free country; and having laid so strong a foundation, there would have been time to experience their use as well as their stability, and to introduce gradually such further improvements, additions, or alterations, as the state of France should appear to require, after experience of those which they had adopted.

But besides that the national spirit might be revolted, (not unnaturally, however unwisely,) at borrowing the essential peculiarities of their new constitution from a country which they were accustomed to consider as the natural rival of their own, there existed among the French a jealousy of the crown, and especially of the privileged classes, with whom they had been so lately engaged in political hostility, which disinclined the greater part of the Assembly to trust the King with much authority, or the Nobles with that influence which any imitation of the English constitution must have assigned to them. A fear prevailed, that whatever privileges should be left to the King or Nobles, would be so many means of attack furnished to them against the new system. Joined to this was the ambition of creating at once, and by their own united wisdom, a constitution as perfect as the armed personification of Wisdom in the heathen mythology. England had worked her way, from practical reformation of abuses, into the adoption of general maxims of government. It was reserved, I thought most of the National Assembly, for France, to adopt a nobler and more

intellectual course, and, by laying down abstract doctrines of public right, to deduce from these their rules of practical legislation;—just as it is said, that in the French naval-yards their vessels are constructed upon the principles of abstract mathematics, while those in England are, or were, chiefly built upon the more technical and mechanical rules. But it seems on ~~this~~ and other occasions to have escaped these acute reasoners, that beams and planks are subject to certain unalterable natural laws, while man is, by the various passions acting in his nature, in contradiction often to the suggestions of his understanding, as well as by the various modifications of society, liable to a thousand variations, all of which call for limitations and exceptions qualifying whatever general maxims may be adopted concerning his duties and his rights.

All such considerations were spurned by the numerous body of the new French legislature, who resolved, in imitation of Medea, to fling into their renovating kettle every existing joint and member of their old constitution, in order to its perfect and entire renovation. This mode of proceeding was liable to three great objections. *First*, that the practical inferences deduced from the abstract principle were always liable to challenge by those, who, in logical language, denied the minor of the proposition, or asserted that the conclusion was irregularly deduced from the premises. *Secondly*, that the legislators, thus grounding the whole basis of their intended constitution upon speculative political opinions, strongly resembled the tailors of Laputa, who, without condescending to take measure of their customers, like brethren of the trade elsewhere, took the girth and altitude of the person by mathematical calculation, and if the clothes did not fit, as was almost always the case, thought it ample consolation for the party concerned to be assured, that, as they worked from infallible rules of art, the error could only be occasioned by his own faulty and irregular conformation of figure. *Thirdly*, A legislature which contents itself with such a constitution as is adapted to the existing state of things, may hope to attain their end, and in presenting it to the people may be entitled to say, that, although the plan is not perfect, it partakes in that but of the nature of all earthly institutions, while it comprehends the elements of as much good as the actual state of society permits; but from the law-makers, who begin by destroying all existing enactments, and assume it as their duty entirely to renovate the constitution of a country, nothing short of absolute perfection can be accepted. They can shelter themselves under no respect to ancient prejudices which they have contradicted, or to circumstances of society which they have thrown out of consideration. They must follow up to the uttermost the principle they have adopted, and their institutions can never be fixed or secure from the encroachments of succeeding innovators, while they retain any taint of that fallibility to which all human inventions are necessarily subject.

The majority of the French Assembly entertained, nevertheless, the ambitious view of making a constitution, corresponding in every respect to those propositions they had laid down as embracing the rights of man, which, if it should not happen to suit the condition of their country, would nevertheless be such as *ought* to have suited it, but for the irregular play of human passions, and the artificial habits acquired in an artificial state of society. But this majority differed among themselves in this essential particular, that the ~~soon~~ division of the legislature, holding that of Mounier for the first, was disposed to place at the head of their newly-manufactured government the reigning King, Louis XVI. This resolution in his favour might be partly out of regard to the long partiality of the nation to the House of Bourbon, partly out of respect for the philanthropical and accommodating character of Louis. We may conceive also that La Fayette, bred a soldier, and Bailli, educated a magistrate, had still, notwithstanding their political creed, a natural, though unphilosophical partiality to their well-meaning and ill-fated sovereign, and a conscientious desire

to relax, so far as his particular interest was concerned, their general rule of reversing all that had previously had a political existence in France.

A THIRD faction, entertaining the same articles of political creed with La Fayette, Bailli, and others, carried them much farther, and set at defiance the scruples which limited the two first parties in their career of reformation. These last agreed with La Fayette on the necessity of reconstructing the whole government upon a new basis, without which entire innovation, they further agreed with him, that it must have been perpetually liable to the chance of a counter-revolution. But carrying their arguments farther than the Constitutional party, as the followers of Fayette, these bolder theorists pleaded the inconsistency and danger of placing at the head of their new system of reformed and regenerated government, a prince accustomed to consider himself, as by inheritance, the legitimate possessor of absolute power. They urged that, like the snake and peasant in the fable, it was impossible that the monarch and his democratical counsellors could forget, the one the loss of his power, the other the constant temptation which must beset the King to attempt its recovery. With more consistency, therefore, than the Constitutionals, this third party of politicians became decided Republicans, determined upon obliterating from the new constitution every name and vestige of monarchy.

The men of letters in the Assembly were, many of them, attached to this faction. They had originally been kept in the back-ground by the lawyers and mercantile part of the Assembly. Many of them possessed great talents, and were by nature men of honour and of virtue. But in great revolutions, it is impossible to resist the dizzying effect of enthusiastic feeling and excited passion. In the violence of their zeal for the liberty of France, they too frequently adopted the maxim, that so glorious an object sanctioned almost any means which could be used to attain it. Under the exaggerated influence of a mistaken patriotism, they were too apt to forget that a crime remains the same in character even when perpetrated in a public cause.*

It was among these ardent men that first arose the idea of forming a club, or society, to serve as a point of union for those who entertained the same political sentiments. Once united, they rendered their sittings public, combined them with affiliated societies in all parts of France, and could thus, as from one common centre, agitate the most remote frontiers with the passionate feelings which electrified the metropolis. This formidable weapon was, in process of time, wrested out of the hands of the Federalists, as the original republicans were invidiously called, by the faction who were generally termed Jacobins, from their influence in that society, and whose existence and peculiarities as a party, we have now to notice.

As yet this FOURTH, and, as it afterwards proved, most formidable party, lurked in secret among the republicans of a higher order and purer sentiments, as they, on their part, had not yet raised the mask, or ventured to declare openly against the plan of a constitutional monarchy. The Jacobins were termed, in ridicule, *Les Enragés*, by the Republicans, who, seeing in them only men of

* A singular instance of this overstrained and dangerous enthusiasm is given by Madame Roland. It being the purpose to rouse the fears and spirit of the people, and direct their animosity against the court party, Grangeneuve agreed that he himself should be murdered, by persons chosen for the purpose, in such a manner that the suspicion of the crime should attach itself to the aristocrats. He went to the place appointed, but Chabot, who was to have shared his fate, neither appeared himself, nor had made the necessary preparations for the assassination of his friend, for which Madame Roland, that high-spirited republican, dilates upon his poltroonery. Yet, what was this patriotic devotion, save a plan to support a false accusation against the innocent, by an act of murder and suicide, which, if the scheme succeeded, was to lead to massacre and proscription? The same false, exaggerated, and distorted views, of the public good centring, as it seemed to them, in the establishment of a pure republic, led Barnave and others to palliate the massacres of September. Most of them might have said of the Liberty which they had worshipped, that at their death they found it an empty name.

a fiery disposition, and violence of deportment and declamation, vainly thought they could halloo them on, and call them off, at their pleasure. They were yet to learn, that when force is solemnly appealed to, the strongest and most ferocious, as they must be foremost in the battle, will not lose their share of the spoil, and are more likely to make the lion's partition. These Jacobins affected to carry the ideas of liberty and equality to the most extravagant lengths, and were laughed at and ridiculed in the Assembly as a sort of fanatics, too absurd to be dreaded. Their character, indeed, was too exaggerated, their habits too openly profligate, their manners too abominably coarse, their schemes too extravagantly violent, to be produced to open day, while yet the decent forms of society were observed. But they were not the less successful in gaining the lower classes, whose cause they pretended peculiarly to espouse, whose passions they inflamed by an eloquence suited to such hearers, and whose tastes they flattered by affectation of brutal manners and vulgar dress. They soon, by these arts, attached to themselves a large body of followers, violently inflamed with the prejudices which had been infused into their minds, and too boldly desperate to hesitate at any measures which should be recommended by their demagogues. What might be the ultimate object of these men cannot be known. We can hardly give any of them credit for being mad enough to have any real patriotic feeling, however extravagantly distorted. Most probably, each had formed some vague prospect of terminating the affair to his own advantage; but in the meantime, all agreed in the necessity of sustaining the revolutionary impulse, of deferring the return of order and quiet, and of resisting and deranging any description of orderly and peaceful government. They were sensible that the return of law, under any established and regular form whatsoever, must render them as contemptible as odious, and were determined to avail themselves of the disorder while it lasted, and to snatch at and enjoy such portions of the national wreck as the tempest might throw within their individual reach.

This foul and desperate faction could not, by all the activity it used, have attained the sway which it exerted amongst the lees of the people, without possessing and exercising extensively the power of suborning inferior leaders among the populace. It has been generally asserted, that means for attaining this important object were supplied by the immense wealth of the nearest prince of the blood royal, that Duke of Orleans, whose name is so unhappily mixed with the history of this period. By his largesses, according to the general report of historians, a number of the most violent writers of pamphlets and newspapers were pensioned, who deluged the public with false news and violent abuse. This prince, it is said, recompensed those popular and ferocious orators, who nightly harangued the people in the Palais Royale, and openly stimulated them to the most violent aggressions upon the persons and property of obnoxious individuals. From the same unhappy man's coffers were paid numbers of those who regularly attended on the debates of the Assembly, crowded the galleries to the exclusion of the public at large, applauded, hissed, exercised an almost domineering influence in the national councils, and were sometimes addressed by the representatives of the people, as if they had themselves been the people of whom they were the scum and the refuse.

Fouler accusations even than these charges were brought forward. Bands of strangers, men of wild, haggard, and ferocious appearance, whose persons the still watchful police of Paris were unacquainted with, began to be seen in the metropolis, like those obscene and ill-omened birds which are seldom visible except before a storm. All these were understood to be suborned by the Duke of Orleans and his agents, to unite with the ignorant, violent, corrupted populace of the great metropolis of France, for the purpose of urging and guiding them to actions of terror and cruelty. The ultimate object of these manœuvres is supposed to have been a change of dynasty, which should gratify the Duke

of Orleans's revenge by the deposition of his cousin, and his ambition by en throning himself in his stead, or at least by nominating him Lieutenant of France, with all the royal powers. The most daring and unscrupulous amongst the Jacobins are said originally to have belonged to the faction of Orleans; but as he manifested a want of decision, and did not avail himself of opportunities of pushing his fortune, they abandoned their leader, (whom they continued, however, to flatter and deceive,) and, at the head of the partizans collected for his service, and paid from his finances, they pursued the path of their individual fortunes.

Besides the various parties which we have detailed, and which gradually developed their discordant sentiments as the Revolution proceeded, the Assembly contained the usual proportion of that prudent class of politicians who are guided by events, and who, in the days of Cromwell, called themselves "Waiters upon Providence;"—men who might boast, with the miller in the tale, that though they could not direct the course of the wind, they could adjust their sails so as to profit by it, blow from what quarter it would.

All the various parties in the Assembly, by whose division the King might, by temporizing measures, have surely profited, were united in a determined course of hostility to the crown and its pretensions, by the course which Louis XVI. was unfortunately advised to pursue. It had been resolved to assume a menacing attitude, and to place the King at the head of a strong force. Orders were given accordingly.

Neckar, though approving of many parts of the proposal made to the Assembly at the royal sitting, had strongly dissented from others, and had opposed the measure of marching troops towards Versailles and Paris to overawe the capital, and, if necessary, the National Assembly. Neckar received his dismissal, and thus a second time the King and the people seemed to be prepared for open war. The force at first glance seemed entirely on the royal side. Thirty regiments were drawn around Paris and Versailles, commanded by Marshal Broglio, an officer of eminence, and believed to be a zealous anti-revolutionist, and a large camp formed under the walls of the metropolis. The town was open on all sides and the only persons by whom defence could be offered were an unarmed mob; but this superiority existed only in appearance. The French guards had already united themselves, or, as the phrase then went, fraternized with the people, yielding to the various modes employed to dispose them to the popular cause; and little attached to their officers most of whom only saw their companies upon the days of parade or duty, an apparent accident, which probably had its origin in an experiment upon the feelings of these regiments, brought the matter to a crisis. The soldiers had been supplied secretly with means of unusual dissipation, and consequently a laxity of discipline was daily gaining ground among them. To correct this licence, eleven of the guards had been committed to prison for military offences; the Parisian mob delivered them by violence, and took them under the protection of the inhabitants, a conduct which made the natural impression on their comrades. Their numbers were three thousand six hundred of the best soldiers in France, accustomed to military discipline, occupying every strong point in the city, and supported by its immense though disorderly populace.

The gaining these regiments gave the Revolutionists the command of Paris, from which the army assembled under Broglio might have found it hard to dislodge them; but these last were more willing to aid than to quell any insurrection which might take place. The modes of seduction which had succeeded with the French guards were sedulously addressed to other corps. The regiments which lay nearest to Paris were not forgotten. They were plied with those temptations which are most powerful with soldiers—wine, women, and money, were supplied in abundance—and it was amidst debauchery and undiscipline that the French army renounced their loyalty, which used to be even

too much the god of their idolatry, and which was now destroyed like the temple of Persepolis, amidst the vapours of wine, and at the instigation of courtizans. There remained the foreign troops, of which there were several regiments, but their disposition was doubtful; and to use them against the citizens of Paris, might have been to confirm the soldiers of the soil in their indisposition to the royal cause, supported as it must then have been by foreigners exclusively.

Meanwhile, the dark intrigues which had been long formed for accomplishing a general insurrection in Paris, were now ready to be brought into action. The populace had been encouraged by success in one or two skirmishes with the *gens-d'armes* and foreign soldiery. They had stood a skirmish with a regiment of German horse, and had been successful. The number of desperate characters who were to lead the van in these violences, was now greatly increased. Deep had called to deep, and the revolutionary clubs of Paris had summoned their confederates from among the most fiery and forward of every province. Besides troops of galley-slaves and deserters, vagabonds of every order flocked to Paris, like ravens to the spoil. To these were joined the lowest inhabitants of a populous city, always ready for riot and rapine; and they were led on and encouraged by men who were in many instances sincere enthusiasts in the cause of liberty, and thought it could only be victorious by the destruction of the present government. The Republican and Jacobin party were open in sentiment and in action, encouraging the insurrection by every means in their power. The Constitutionals, more passive, were still rejoiced to see the storm arise, conceiving such a crisis was necessary to compel the King to place the helm of the state in their hands. It might have been expected, that the assembled force of the crown would be employed to preserve the peace at least, and prevent the general system of robbery and plunder which seemed about to ensue. They appeared not, and the citizens themselves took arms by thousands, and tens of thousands, forming the burgher militia, which was afterwards called the National Guard. The royal arsenals were plundered to obtain arms, and La Fayette was adopted the commander-in-chief of this new army, a sufficient sign that they were to embrace what was called the Constitutional party. Another large proportion of the population was hastily armed with pikes, a weapon which was thence termed Revolutionary. The Baron de Besenval, at the head of the Swiss guards, two foreign regiments, and eight hundred horse, after an idle demonstration which only served to encourage the insurgents, retired from Paris without firing a shot, having, he says in his *Memoirs*, no orders how to act, and being desirous to avoid precipitating a civil war. His retreat was the signal for a general insurrection, in which the French Guard, the National Guard, and the armed mob of Paris, took the Bastille, and massacred a part of the garrison.

We are not tracing minutely the events of the Revolution, but only attempting to describe their spirit and tendency; and we may here notice two changes, which for the first time were observed to have taken place in the character of the Parisian populace.

The *Badands de Paris*, as they were called in derision, had been hitherto viewed as a light, laughing, thoughtless race, passionately fond of news, though not very acutely distinguishing betwixt truth and falsehood, quick in adopting impressions, but incapable of forming firm and concerted resolutions, still more incapable of executing them, and so easily overawed by an armed force, that about twelve hundred police-soldiers had been hitherto sufficient to keep all Paris in subjection. But in the attack of the Bastille, they showed themselves daring, resolute, and unyielding, as well as prompt and headlong. These new qualities were in some degree owing to the support which they received from the French guards; but are still more to be attributed to the loftier and more decided character belonging to the revolutionary spirit, and the mixture of men of the better classes, and of the high tone which belongs to them, among the mere rabble of the city. The garrison of this too-famous castle was indeed very

weak, but its deep moats, and insurmountable bulwarks, presented the most imposing show of resistance; and the triumph which the popular cause obtained in an exploit seemingly so desperate, infused a general consternation into the King and the royalists.

The second remarkable particular was, that from being one of the most light-hearted and kind-tempered of nations, the French seemed upon the Revolution to have been animated not merely with the courage, but with the rabid fury, of unchained wild beasts. Foulon and Berthier, two individuals whom they considered as enemies of the people, were put to death, with circumstances of cruelty and insult fitting only at the death-stake of a Cherokee encampment; and, in emulation of literal cannibals, there were men, or rather monsters, found, not only to tear asunder the limbs of their victims, but to eat their hearts, and drink their blood. The intensity of the new doctrines of freedom, the animosity occasioned by civil commotion, cannot account for these atrocities, even in the lowest and most ignorant of the populace. Those who led the way in such unheard-of enormities, must have been practised murderers and assassins, mixed with the insurgents, like old hounds in a young pack, to lead them on, flesh them with slaughter, and teach an example of cruelty too easily learned, but hard to be ever forgotten. The metropolis was entirely in the hands of the insurgents, and civil war or submission was the only resource left to the sovereign. For the former course sufficient reasons might be urged. The whole proceedings in the metropolis had been entirely insurrectionary, without the least pretence of authority from the National Assembly, which continued sitting at Versailles, discussing the order of the day, while the citizens of Paris were storming castles, and tearing to pieces their prisoners, without authority from the national representatives, and even without the consent of their own civic rulers. The provost of the merchants was assassinated at the commencement of the disturbance, and a terrified committee of electors were the only persons who preserved the least semblance of authority, which they were obliged to exercise under the control and at the pleasure of the infuriated multitude. A large proportion of the citizens, though assuming arms for the protection of themselves and their families, had no desire of employing them against the royal authority; a much larger only united themselves with the insurgents, because, in a moment of universal agitation, they were the active and predominant party. Of these the former desired peace and protection; the latter, from habit and shame, must have soon deserted the side which was ostensibly conducted by ruffians and common stabbers, and drawn themselves to that which protected peace and good order. We have too good an opinion of a people so enlightened as those of France, too good an opinion of human nature in any country, to believe that men will persist in evil, if defended in their honest and legal rights.

What, in this case, was the duty of Louis XVI.? We answer without hesitation, that which George III. of Britain proposed to himself, when, in the name of the Protestant Religion, a violent and disorderly mob opened prisons, destroyed property, burned houses, and committed, though with far fewer symptoms of atrocity, the same course of disorder which now laid waste Paris. It is known that when his ministers hesitated to give an opinion in point of law concerning the employment of military force for protection of life and property against a disorderly banditti, the King, as chief magistrate, declared his own purpose to march into the blazing city at the head of his guards, and with the strong hand of war to subdue the insurgents, and restore peace to the affrighted capital. The same call now sounded loudly in the ear of Louis. He was still the chief magistrate of the people, whose duty it was to protect their lives and property—still commander of that army levied and paid for protecting the law of the country, and the lives and property of the subject. The King ought to have proceeded to the National Assembly without an

instant's delay, cleared himself before that body of the suspicions with which calumny had loaded him, and required and commanded the assistance of the representatives of the people to quell the frightful excesses of murder and rapine which dishonoured the capital. It is almost certain that the whole moderate party, as they were called, would have united with the nobles and the clergy. The throne was not yet empty, nor the sword unswayed. Louis had surrendered much, and might, in the course of the change impending, have been obliged to surrender more; but he was still King of France, still bound by his coronation oath to prevent murder and put down insurrection. He could not be considered as crushing the cause of freedom, in answering a call to discharge his kingly duty; for what had the cause of reformation, proceeding as it was by the peaceful discussion of an unarmed convention, to do with the open war waged by the insurgents of Paris upon the King's troops, or with the gratuitous murders and atrocities with which the capital had been polluted? With such members as shame and fear might have brought over from the opposite side, the King, exerting himself as a prince, would have formed a majority strong enough to show the union which subsisted betwixt the Crown and the Assembly, when the protection of the laws was the point in question. With such a support—or without it—for it is the duty of the prince, in a crisis of such emergency, to serve the people, and save the country, by the exercise of his royal prerogative, whether with or without the concurrence of the other branches of the legislature,—the King, at the head of his *Gardes de Corps*, of the regiments which might have been found faithful, of the nobles and gentry, whose principles of chivalry devoted them to the service of their sovereign, ought to have marched into Paris, and put down the insurrection by the armed hand of authority, or fallen in the attempt, like the representative of Henry IV. His duty called upon him, and the authority with which he was invested enabled him, to act this part; which, in all probability, would have dismayed the factious, encouraged the timid, decided the wavering, and, by obtaining a conquest over lawless and brute violence, would have paved the way for a moderate and secure reformation in the state.

But, having obtained this victory, in the name of the Law of the realm, the King could only be vindicated in having resorted to arms, by using his conquest with such moderation, as to show that he threw his sword into the one scale, solely in order to balance the clubs and poniards of popular insurrection, with which the other was loaded. He must then have evinced that he did not mean to obstruct the quiet course of moderation and constitutional reform, in stemming that of headlong and violent innovation. Many disputes would have remained to be settled between him and his subjects; but the process of improving the constitution, though less rapid, would have been more safe and certain, and the kingdom of France might have attained a degree of freedom equal to that which she now possesses, without passing through a brief but dreadful anarchy to long years of military despotism, without the loss of mines of treasure, and without the expenditure of oceans of blood. To those who object the peril of this course, and the risk to the person of the sovereign from the fury of the insurgents, we can only answer, in the words of the elder Horatius, *Qu'il mourût*. Prince or peasant have alike lived long enough, when the choice comes to be betwixt loss of life and an important duty undischarged. Death, at the head of his troops, would have saved Louis more cruel humiliation, his subjects a deeper crime.

We do not affect to deny, that in this course there was considerable risk of another kind, and that it is very possible that the King, susceptible as he was to the influence of those around him, might have lain under strong temptation to have resumed the despotic authority, of which he had in a great measure divested himself, and have thus abused a victory gained over insurrection into a weapon of tyranny. But the spirit of liberty was so strong in France, the principles of

leniency and moderation so natural to the King, his own late hazards so great, and the future, considering the general disposition of his subjects, so doubtful, that we are inclined to think a victory by the sovereign at that moment would have been followed by temperate measures. How the people used theirs is but too well known. At any rate, we have strongly stated our opinion, that Louis would at this crisis have been justified in employing force to compel order, but that the crime would have been deep and inexpiable had he abused a victory to restore despotism.

It may be said, indeed, that the preceding statement takes too much for granted, and that the violence employed on the 14th July was probably only an anticipation of the forcible measures which might have been expected from the King against the Assembly. The answer to this is, that the successful party may always cast on the loser the blame of commencing the brawl, as the wolf punished the lamb for troubling the course of the water, though he drank lowest down the stream. But when we find one party completely prepared and ready for action, forming plans boldly, and executing them skilfully, and observe the other uncertain and unprovided, betraying all the imbecility of surprise and indecision, we must necessarily believe the attack was premeditated on the one side, and unexpected on the other.

The abandonment of thirty thousand stand of arms at the Hotel des Invalides, which were surrendered without the slightest resistance, though three Swiss regiments lay encamped in the Champs Elysées; the totally unprovided state of the Bastille, garrisoned by about one hundred Swiss and Invalids, and without provisions even for that small number; the absolute inaction of the Baron de Bezenval, who,—without entangling his troops in the narrow streets, which was pleaded as his excuse,—might, by marching along the Boulevards, a passage so well calculated for the manœuvres of regular troops, have relieved the siege of that fortress;* and, finally, that General's bloodless retreat from Paris,—show that the King had, under all these circumstances, not only adopted no measures of a hostile character, but must, on the contrary, have issued such orders as prevented his officers from repelling force by force.

We are led, therefore, to believe, that the scheme of assembling the troops round Paris was one of those half measures, to which, with great political weakness, Louis resorted more than once—an attempt to intimidate by the demonstration of force, which he was previously resolved not to use. Had his purposes of aggression been serious, five thousand troops of loyal principles—and such might surely have been selected—would, acting suddenly and energetically, have better assured him of the city of Paris, than six times that number brought to waste themselves in debauch around its walls, and to be withdrawn without the discharge of a musket. Indeed, the courage of Louis was of a passive, not an active nature, conspicuous in enduring adversity, but not of that energetic and decisive character which turns dubious affairs into prosperity, and achieves by its own exertions the success which Fortune denies.

The insurrection of Paris being acquiesced in by the sovereign, was recognized by the nation as a legitimate conquest, instead of a state crime; and the tameness of the King in enduring its violence, was assumed as a proof that the citizens had but anticipated his intended forcible measures against the Assembly, and prevented the military occupation of the city. In the debates of the As-

* We have heard from a spectator who could be trusted, that, during the course of the attack on the Bastille, a cry arose among the crowd that the regiment of Royales Allemandes were coming upon them. There was at that moment such a disposition to fly, as plainly showed what would have been the effect had a body of troops appeared in reality. The Baron de Bezenval had commanded a body of the guards, when, some weeks previously, they subdued an insurrection in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine. On that occasion many of the mob were killed; and he observes in his Memoirs, that, while the citizens of Paris termed him their preserver, he was very coldly received at court. He might be, therefore, unwilling to commit himself, by acting decidedly on the 12th July.

sembly itself, the insurrection was vindicated; the fears and suspicions alleged as its motives were justified as well-founded; the passions of the citizens were sympathized with, and their worst excesses palliated and excused. When the horrors accompanying the murder of Berthier and Foulon were dilated upon by Lally Tolendahl in the Assembly, he was heard and answered as if he had made mountains of mole-hills. Mirabeau said, that "it was a time to think, and not to feel." Barnave asked, with a sneer, "If the blood which had been shed was so pure?" Robespierre, rising into animation with acts of cruelty fitted to call forth the interest of such a mind, observed, that "the people, oppressed for ages, had a right to the revenge of a day."

But how long did that day last, or what was the fate of those who justified its enormities? From that hour the mob of Paris, or rather the suborned agitators by whom the actions of that blind multitude were dictated, became masters of the destiny of France. An insurrection was organized whenever there was any purpose to be carried, and the Assembly might be said to work under the impulse of the popular current, as mechanically as the wheel of a water engine is driven by a cascade.

The victory of the Bastille was extended in its consequences to the cabinet and to the legislative body. In the former, those ministers who had counselled the King to stand on the defensive against the Assembly, or rather to assume a threatening attitude, suddenly lost courage when they heard the fate of Foulon and Berthier. The Baron de Breteuil, the unpopular successor of Neckar, was deprived of his office, and driven into exile; and, to complete the triumph of the people, Neckar himself was recalled by their unanimous voice.

The King came, or was conducted to, the Hotel de Ville of Paris, in what, compared to the triumph of the minister, was a sort of ovation, in which he appeared rather as a captive than otherwise. He entered into the edifice under a vault of steel, formed by the crossed sabres and pikes of those who had been lately engaged in combating his soldiers, and murdering his subjects. He adopted the cockade of the insurrection; and in doing so, ratified and approved of the acts done expressly against his command, acquiesced in the victory obtained over his own authority, and completed that conquest by laying down his arms.

The conquest of the Bastille was the first, almost the only appeal to arms during the earlier part of the Revolution; and the popular success, afterwards sanctioned by the monarch, showed that nothing remained save the name of the ancient government. The King's younger brother, the Comte d'Artois, now reigning King of France, had been distinguished as the leader and rallying point of the royalists. He left the kingdom with his children, and took refuge in Turin. Other distinguished princes, and many of the inferior nobility, adopted the same course, and their departure seemed to announce to the public that the royal cause was indeed desperate, since it was deserted by those most interested in its defence. This was the first act of general emigration, and although, in the circumstances, it may be excused, yet it must still be termed a great political error. For though, on the one hand, it is to be considered, that these princes and their followers had been educated in the belief that the government of France rested in the King's person, and was identified with him; and that when the King was displaced from his permanent situation of power, the whole social system of France was totally ruined, and nothing remained which could legally govern or be governed; yet, on the other hand, it must be remembered that the instant the emigrants crossed the frontier, they at once lost all the natural advantages of birth and education, and separated themselves from the country which it was their duty to defend.

To draw to a head, and raise an insurrection for the purpose of achieving a counter revolution, would have been the ready and natural resource. But the influence of the privileged classes was so totally destroyed, that the scheme seemed to have been considered as hopeless, even if the King's consent could

have been obtained. To remain in France, whether in Paris or the departments, must have exposed them, in their avowed character of aristocrats, to absolute assassination. It has been therefore urged, that emigration was their only resource.

But there remained for these princes, nobles, and cavaliers, a more noble task, could they but have united themselves cordially to that portion of the Assembly, originally a strong one, which professed, without destroying the existing state of monarchy in France, to wish to infuse into it the spirit of rational liberty, and to place Louis in such a situation as should have insured him the safe and honourable station of a limited monarch, though it deprived him of the powers of a despot. It is in politics, however, as in religion—the slighter in itself the difference between two parties, the more tenacious is each of the propositions in which they disagree. The pure Royalists were so far from being disposed to coalesce with those who blended an attachment to monarchy with a love of liberty, that they scarce accounted them fit to share the dangers and distresses to which all were alike reduced.

This first emigration proceeded not a little perhaps on the feeling of self-consequence among those by whom it was adopted. The high-born nobles of which it was chiefly composed, had been long the world, as it is termed, to Paris and to each other, and it was a natural conclusion, that their withdrawing themselves from the sphere which they adorned, must have been felt as an irremediable deprivation. They were not aware how easily, in the hour of need, perfumed lamps are, to all purposes of utility, replaced by ordinary candles, and that, carrying away with them much of dignity, gallantry, and grace, they left behind an ample stock of wisdom and valour, and all the other essential qualities by which nations are governed and defended.

The situation and negotiations of the emigrants in the courts to which they fled, were also prejudicial to their own reputation, and consequently to the royal cause, to which they had sacrificed their country. Reduced “to show their misery in foreign lands,” they were naturally desirous of obtaining foreign aid to return to their own, and laid themselves under the heavy accusation of instigating a civil war, while Louis was yet the resigned, if not the contented, sovereign of the newly modified empire. To this subject we must afterwards return.

The conviction that the ancient monarchy of France had fallen for ever, gave encouragement to the numerous parties which united in desiring a new constitution, although they differed on the principles on which it was to be founded. But all agreed that it was necessary, in the first place, to clear away the remains of the ancient state of things. They resolved upon the abolition of all feudal rights, and managed the matter with so much address that it was made to appear on the part of those who held them a voluntary surrender. The debate in the National Assembly* was turned by the popular leaders upon the odious character of the feudal rights and privileges, as being the chief cause of the general depression and discontent in which the kingdom was involved. The Nobles understood the hint which was thus given them, and answered it with the ready courage and generosity which has been at all times the attribute of their order, though sometimes these noble qualities have been indiscreetly exercised. “Is it from us personally that the nation expects sacrifices?” said the Marquis de Foucault; “be assured that you shall not appeal in vain to our generosity. We are desirous to defend to the last the rights of the monarchy, but we can be lavish of our peculiar and personal interests.”

The same general sentiment pervaded at once the Clergy and Nobles, who, sufficiently sensible that what they resigned could not operate essentially to the quiet of the state, were yet too proud to have even the appearance of placing their own selfish interests in competition with the public welfare. The whole

* 4th August, 1789.

privileged classes seemed at once seized with a spirit of the most lavish generosity, and hastened to despoil themselves of all their peculiar immunities and feudal rights. Clergy and laymen vied with each other in the nature and extent of their sacrifices. Privileges, whether prejudicial or harmless, rational or ridiculous, were renounced in the mass. A sort of delirium pervaded the Assembly; each member strove to distinguish the sacrifice of his personal claims by something more remarkable than had yet attended any of the previous renunciations. They who had no rights of their own to resign, had the easier and more pleasant task of surrendering those of their constituents: the privileges of corporations, the monopolies of crafts, the rights of cities, were heaped on the national altar; and the members of the National Assembly seemed to look about in ecstasy, to consider of what else they could despoil themselves and others, as if, like the silly old earl in the civil dissensions of England, there had been an actual pleasure in the act of renouncing.* The feudal rights were in many instances odious, in others oppressive, and in others ridiculous; but it was ominous to see the institutions of ages overthrown at random, by a set of men talking and raving all at once, so as to verify the observation of the Englishman, Williams, one of their own members, "The fools! they would be thought to deliberate, when they cannot even listen." The singular occasion on which enthusiasm, false shame, and mutual emulation, thus induced the Nobles and Clergy to despoil themselves of all their seigniorial rights, was called by some the *day of the sacrifices*, by others, more truly, the *day of the dupes*.

During the currency of this legislative frenzy, as it might be termed, the popular party, with countenances affecting humility and shame at having nothing themselves to surrender, sat praising each new sacrifice, as the wily companions of a thoughtless and generous young man applaud the lavish expense by which they themselves profit, while their seeming admiration is an incentive to new acts of extravagance.

At length, when the sacrifice seemed complete, they began to pause and look around them. Some one thought of the separate distinctions of the provinces of France, as Normandy, Languedoc, and so forth. Most of these provinces possessed rights and privileges acquired by victory or treaty, which even Richelieu had not dared to violate. As soon as mentioned, they were at once thrown into the revolutionary smelting-pot, to be re-modelled after the universal equality which was the fashion of the day. It was not urged, and would not have been listened to, that these rights had been bought with blood, and sanctioned by public faith; that the legislature, though it had a right to extend them to others, could not take them from the possessors without compensation; and it escaped the Assembly no less, how many honest and generous sentiments are connected with such provincial distinctions, which form, as it were, a second and inner fence around the love of a common country; or how much harmless enjoyment the poor man derives from the consciousness that he shares the privileges of some peculiar district. Such considerations might have induced the legislature to pause at least, after they had removed such marks of distinction as tended to engender jealousy betwixt inhabitants of the same kingdom. But the revolutionary level was to be passed over all that tended to distinguish one district, or one individual, from another.

There was one order in the kingdom which, although it had joined largely and readily in the sacrifices of the *day of dupes*, was still considered as indebted to the state, and was doomed to undergo an act of total spoliation. The

* "Is there nothing else we can renounce?" said the old Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, in the time of the Commonwealth, after he had joined in renouncing Church and King, Crown and Law. "Can no one think of anything else? I love renouncing." The hasty renunciations of the French nobles and churchmen were brought about in the manner practised of yore in convivial parties, when he who gave a toast burned his wig, had a loose tooth drawn, or made some other sacrifice, which, according to the laws of computation, was an example necessary to be imitated by all the rest of the company, with whatever prejudice to their wardrobe or their persons.

Clergy had agreed, and the Assembly had decreed, on 4th August, that the tithes should be declared redeemable, at a moderate price, by the proprietors subject to pay them. This regulation ratified, at least, the legality of the Clergy's title. Nevertheless, in violation of the public faith thus pledged, the Assembly, three days afterwards, pretended that the surrender of tithes had been absolute, and that, in lieu of that supposed revenue, the nation was only bound to provide decently for the administration of divine worship. Even the Abbé Sieyès on this occasion deserted the revolutionary party, and made an admirable speech against this iniquitous measure. "You would be free," he exclaimed, with vehemence, "and you know not how to be just!" A curate in the assembly, recalling to mind the solemn invocation by which the Tiers Etat had called upon the clergy to unite with them, asked, with similar energy, "Was it to rob us, that you invited us to join with you in the name of the God of Peace?" Mirabeau, on the other hand, forgot the vehemence with which he had pleaded the right of property inherent in religious bodies, and lent his sophistry to defend what his own reasoning had proved in a similar case to be indefensible. The complaints of the Clergy were listened to in contemptuous silence, or replied to with bitter irony, by those who were conscious how little sympathy that body were likely to meet from the nation in general, and who therefore spoke "as having power to do wrong."

We must now revert to the condition of the kingdom of France at large, while her ancient institutions were crumbling to pieces of themselves, or were forcibly pulled down by state innovators. That fine country was ravaged by a civil war of aggravated horrors, waged betwixt the rich and poor, and marked by every species of brutal violence. The peasants, their minds filled with a thousand wild suppositions, and incensed by the general scarcity of provisions, were everywhere in arms, and everywhere attacked the chateaux of their *Seigneurs*, whom they were incited to look upon as enemies of the Revolution, and particularly of the commons. In most instances they were successful, and burnt the dwellings of the nobility, practising all the circumstances of rage and cruelty to which the minds of barbarians are influenced. Men were murdered in presence of their wives; wives and daughters violated before the eyes of their husbands and parents; some were put to death by lingering tortures; others by sudden and general massacre. Against some of these unhappy gentlemen, doubtless, the peasants might have wrongs to remember and to avenge; many of them, however, had borne their faculties so meekly that they did not even suspect the ill intentions of these peasants, until their castles and country-seats kindled with the general conflagration, and made part of the devouring element which raged through the whole kingdom.

What were the National Assembly doing at this dreadful crisis? They were discussing the abstract doctrines of the rights of man, instead of exacting from the subject the respect due to his social duties.

Yet a large party in the Convention, and who had hitherto led the way in the paths of the Revolution, now conceived that the goal was attained, and that it was time to use the curb and forbear the spur. Such was the opinion of La Fayette and his followers, who considered the victory over the Royalists as complete, and were desirous to declare the Revolution ended, and erect a substantial form of government on the ruins of monarchy, which lay prostrate at their feet.

They had influence enough in the Assembly to procure a set of resolutions, declaring the monarchy hereditary in the person of the King and present family, on which basis they proceeded to erect what might be termed a Royal Democracy, or, in plainer terms, a Republic, governed, in truth, by a popular assembly, but encumbered with the expense of a king, to whom they desired to leave no real power, or free will to exercise it, although his name was to remain in the front of edicts, and although he was still to be considered entitled to command their armies, as the executive authority of the state.

A struggle was made to extend the royal authority to an absolute negative upon the decrees of the representative body; and though it was limited by the jealousy of the popular party to a suspensive veto only, yet even this degree of influence was supposed too dangerous in the hands of a monarch who had but lately been absolute. There is indeed an evident dilemma in the formation of a democracy, with a king for its ostensible head. Either the monarch will remain contented with his daily parade and daily food, and thus play the part of a mere pageant, in which case he is a burthensome expense to the state, which a popular government, in prudent economy, as well as from the severity of principle assumed by republicans, are particularly bound to avoid; or else he will naturally endeavour to improve the shadow and outward form of power into something like sinew and substance, and the democracy will be unexpectedly assailed with the spear which they desired should be used only as their standard pole.

To these reasonings many of the Deputies would perhaps have answered, had they spoken their real sentiments, that it was yet too early to propose to the French a pure republic, and that it was necessary to render the power of the King insignificant, before abolishing a title to which the public ear had been so long accustomed. In the meantime they took care to divest the monarch of whatever protection he might have received from an intermediate senate, or chamber, placed betwixt the King and the National Assembly. "One God," exclaimed Rabaut St Etienne, "one Nation, one King, and one Chamber." This advocate for unity at once and uniformity, would scarce have been listened to if he had added, "one nose, one tongue, one arm, and one eye;" but his first concatenation of unities formed a phrase; and an imposing phrase, which sounds well, and can easily be repeated, has immense force in a revolution. The proposal for a Second or Upper Chamber, whether hereditary like that of England, or conservative like that of America, was rejected as aristocratical. Thus the King of France was placed in respect to the populace, as Canute of old to the advancing tide—he was entitled to sit on his throne and command the waves to respect him, and take the chance of their obeying his commands, or of being overwhelmed by them. If he was designed to be an integral part of the constitution, this should not have been—if he was considered as something that it was more seemly to abandon to his fate than to destroy by violence, the plan was not ill concerted.

CHAPTER V.

Plan of the Democrats to bring the King and Assembly to Paris.—Banquet of the Garde du Corps.—Riot at Paris—A formidable Mob of Women assemble to march to Versailles—The National Guard refuse to act against the Insurgents, and demand also to be led to Versailles—The Female Mob arrive—Their behaviour to the Assembly—to the King—Alarming Disorders at Night—La Fayette arrives with the National Guard—Mob force the Palace—Murder the Body Guards—The Queen's safety endangered—Fayette's arrival with his Force restores Order.—King and Royal Family obliged to go to reside at Paris.—Description of the Procession—This Step agreeable to the Views of the Constitutionalists, and of the Republicans, and of the Anarchists.—Duke of Orleans sent to England.

WE have mentioned the various restrictions upon the royal authority, which had been successively sanctioned by the National Assembly. But the various factions, all of which tended to democracy, were determined upon manœuvres for abating the royal authority, more actively powerful than those which the

Assembly dared yet to venture upon. For this purpose, all those who desired to carry the Revolution to extremity, became desirous to bring the sittings of the National Assembly and the residence of the King within the precincts of Paris, and to place them under the influence of that popular frenzy which they had so many ways of exciting, and which might exercise the authority of terror over the body of representatives, fill their galleries with a wild and tumultuous band of partisans, surround their gates with an infuriated populace, and thus dictate the issue of each deliberation. What fate was reserved for the King, after incidents will sufficiently show. To effect an object so important, the republican party strained every effort, and succeeded in raising the popular ferment to the highest pitch.

Their first efforts were unsuccessful. A deputation, formidable from their numbers and clamorous violence, was about to sally from Paris to petition, as they called it, for the removal of the royal family and National Assembly to Paris, but was dispersed by the address of La Fayette and Bailli. Nevertheless it seemed decreed that the republicans should carry their favourite measures, less through their own proper strength, great as that was, than by the advantage afforded by the blunders of the royalists. An imprudence—it seems to deserve no harsher name—which occurred within the precincts of the royal palace at Versailles, gave the demagogues an opportunity, sooner probably than they expected, of carrying their point by a repetition of the violences which had already occurred.

The town of Versailles owed its splendour and wealth entirely to its being the royal residence, yet abounded with a population singularly ill disposed towards the King and royal family. The National Guard of the place, amounting to some thousands, were animated by the same feelings. There were only about four hundred *Gardes de Corps*, or Life-guards, upon whom reliance could be placed for the defence of the royal family, in case of any popular tumult either in Versailles itself, or directed thither from Paris. These troops consisted of gentlemen of trust and confidence, but their numbers were few in proportion to the extent of the palace, and their very quality rendered them obnoxious to the people as armed aristocrats.

About two-thirds of their number, to avoid suspicion and gain confidence, had been removed to Rambouillet. In these circumstances, the grenadiers of the French Guards, so lately in arms against the royal authority, with an inconsistency not unnatural to men of their profession, took it into their heads to become zealous for recovery of the posts which they had formerly occupied around the King's person, and threatened openly to march to Versailles to take possession of the routine of duty at the palace, a privilege which they considered as their due, notwithstanding that they had deserted their posts against the King's command, and were now about to resume them contrary to his consent. The regiment of Flanders was brought up to Versailles, to prevent a movement fraught with so much danger to the royal family. The presence of this corps had been required by the municipality, and the measure had been acquiesced in by the Assembly, though not without some expressive indications of suspicion.

The regiment of Flanders arrived accordingly, and the *Gardes de Corps*, according to a custom universal in the French garrisons, invited the officers to an entertainment, at which the officers of the Swiss guards, and those of the National Guard of Versailles, were also guests. This ill-omened feast was given in the Opera Hall of the palace, almost within hearing of the sovereigns; the healths of the royal family were drank with the enthusiasm naturally inspired by the situation. The King and Queen imprudently agreed to visit the scene of festivity, carrying with them the Dauphin. Their presence raised the spirits of the company, already excited by wine and music, to the highest pitch; royalist tunes were played, the white cockade, distributed by the ladies who attended

the Queen, was mounted with enthusiasm, and it is said that of the nation was trodden under foot.

If we consider the cause of this wild scene, it seems natural enough that the Queen, timid as a woman, anxious as a wife and a mother, might, in order to propitiate the favour of men who were summoned expressly to be the guard of the royal family, incautiously have recourse to imitate, in a slight degree, and towards one regiment, the arts of conciliation, which in a much grosser shape had been used by the popular party to shake the fidelity of the whole army. But it is impossible to conceive that the King, or ministers, could have hoped, by the transitory and drunken flash of enthusiasm elicited from a few hundred men during a carousal, to commence the counter-revolution, which they dared not attempt when they had at their command thirty thousand troops, under an experienced general.

But as no false step among the royalists remained unimproved by their adversaries, the military feast of Versailles was presented to the people of Paris under a light very different from that in which it must be viewed by posterity. The Jacobins were the first to sound the alarm through all their clubs and societies, and the hundreds of hundreds of popular orators whom they had at their command, excited the citizens by descriptions of the most dreadful plots, fraught with massacres and proscriptions. Every effort had already been used to heat the popular mind against the King and Queen, whom, in allusion to the obnoxious power granted to them by the law, they had of late learned to curse and insult, under the names of Monsieur and Madame Veto. The King had recently delayed yielding his sanction to the declarations of the Rights of Man, until the Constitution was complete. This had been severely censured by the Assembly, who spoke of sending a deputation to extort his consent to these declarations, before presenting him with the practical results which they intended to bottom on them. A dreadful scarcity, amounting nearly to a famine, rendered the populace even more accessible than usual to desperate counsels. The feasts, amid which the aristocrats were represented as devising their plots, seemed an insult on the public misery. When the minds of the lower orders were thus prejudiced, it was no difficult matter to produce an insurrection.

That of the 5th October, 1789, was of a singular description, the insurgents being chiefly of the female sex. The market-women, *Dames aux Halles*, as they are called, half unsexed by the masculine nature of their employments, and entirely so by the ferocity of their manners, had figured early in the Revolution. With these were allied and associated most of the worthless and barbarous of their own sex, such disgraceful specimens of humanity as serve but to show in what a degraded state it may be found to exist. Females of this description began to assemble early in the morning, in large groups, with the cries for "bread," which so easily rouse a starving metropolis. There were observed amongst them many men disguised as women, and they compelled all the females they met to go along with them. They marched to the Hotel de Ville, broke boldly through several squadrons of the National Guard, who were drawn up in front of that building for its defence, and were with difficulty dissuaded from burning the records it contained. They next seized a magazine of arms, with three or four pieces of cannon, and were joined by a miscellaneous rabble, armed with pikes, scythes, and similar instruments, who called themselves the conquerors of the Bastille. The still increasing multitude re-echoed the cry of "Bread, bread!—to Versailles! to Versailles!"

The National Guard were now called out in force, but speedily showed their officers that they too were infected with the humour of the times, and as much indisposed to subordination as the mob, to disperse which they were summoned. La Fayette put himself at their head, not to give his own, but to receive their orders. They refused to act against women, who, they said, were starving, and in their turn demanded to be led to Versailles, to dethrone,—such was their

language,—“the King, who was a driveller, and place the crown on the head of his son.” La Fayette hesitated, implored, explained; but he had as yet to learn the situation of a revolutionary general. “Is it not strange,” said one of his soldiers, who seemed quite to understand the military relation of officer and private on such an occasion, “is it not strange that La Fayette pretends to command the people, when it is his part to receive orders from them?”

Soon afterwards an order arrived from the Assembly of the Commune of Paris, enjoining the commandant's march, upon his own report that it was impossible to withstand the will of the people. He marched accordingly in good order, and at the head of a large force of the National Guard, about four or five hours after the departure of the mob, who, while he waited in a state of indecision, were already far on their way to Versailles.

It does not appear that the King, or his ministers, had any information of these hostile movements. Assuredly, there could not have been a royalist in Paris willing to hazard a horse or a groom to carry such intelligence where the knowledge of it must have been so important. The leading members of the Assembly, assembled at Versailles, were better informed. “These gentlemen,” said Barbantanne, looking at the part of the hall where the nobles and clergy usually sat, “wish more light—they shall have lanterns,* they may rely upon it.” Mirabeau went behind the chair of Mounier, the president. “Paris is marching upon us,” he said.—“I know not what you mean,” said Mounier.—“Believe me or not, all Paris is marching upon us—dissolve the sitting.”—“I never hurry the deliberations,” said Mounier.—“Then feign illness,” said Mirabeau,—“go to the palace, tell them what I say, and give me for authority. But there is not a minute to lose—Paris marches upon us.”—“So much the better,” answered Mounier; “we will be a republic the sooner.”†

Shortly after this singular dialogue, occasioned probably by a sudden movement, in which Mirabeau showed the aristocratic feelings from which he never could shake himself free, the female battalion, together with their masculine allies, continued their march uninterruptedly, and entered Versailles in the afternoon, singing patriotic airs, intermingled with blasphemous obscenities, and the most furious threats against the Queen. Their first visit was to the National Assembly, where the beating of drums, shouts, shrieks, and a hundred confused sounds, interrupted the deliberations. A man called Mailliard, brandishing a sword in his hand, and supported by a woman holding a long pole, to which was attached a tambour de basque, commenced a harangue in the name of the sovereign people. He announced that they wanted bread; that they were convinced the ministers were traitors; that the arm of the people was uplifted, and about to strike;—with much to the same purpose, in the exaggerated eloquence of the period. The same sentiments were echoed by his followers, mingled with the bitterest threats, against the Queen in particular, that fury could contrive, expressed in language of the most energetic brutality.

The Amazons then crowded into the Assembly, mixed themselves with the members, occupied the seat of the president, of the secretaries, produced or procured victuals and wine, drank, sung, swore, scolded, screamed,—abused some of the members, and loaded others with their loathsome caresses.

A deputation of these madwomen was at length sent to St Priest, the minister, a determined royalist, who received them sternly, and replied, to their de-

* In the beginning of the Revolution, when the mob executed their pleasure on the individuals against whom their suspicions were directed, the lamp-irons served for gibbets, and the lines by which the lamps, or lanterns, were disposed across the street, were ready halters. Hence the cry of “*Les Aristocrates à la lanterne.*” The answer of the Abbé Maury is well known. “*Éa! mes amis, et quand vous m'avez mis à la lanterne, est ce que vous verrez plus clair?*”

† Mounier must be supposed to speak ironically, and in allusion, not to his own opinions, but to Mirabeau's revolutionary tenets. Another account of this singular conversation states his answer to have been, “All the better. If the mob kill all of us—remark, I say *all* of us, it will be the better for the country.”

mand of bread, "When you had but one king, you never wanted bread—you have now twelve hundred—go ask it of them." They were introduced to the King, however, and were so much struck with the kind interest which he took in the state of Paris, that their hearts relented in his favour, and the deputies returned to their constituents, shouting *Vive le Roi!*

Had the tempest depended on the mere popular breeze, it might now have been lulled to sleep; but there was a secret ground-swell, a heaving upwards of the bottom of the abyss, which could not be conjured down by the awakened feelings or convinced understandings of the deputation. A cry was raised that the deputies had been bribed to represent the King favourably; and, in this humour of suspicion, the army of Amazons stripped their garters, for the purpose of strangling their own delegates. They had by this time ascertained, that neither the National Guard of Versailles, nor the regiment of Flanders, whose transitory loyalty had passed away with the fumes of the wine of the banquet, would oppose them by force, and that they had only to deal with the *Gardes de Corps*, who dared not to act with vigour, lest they should provoke a general attack on the palace, while the most complete distraction and indecision reigned within its precincts. Bold in consequence, the female mob seized on the exterior avenues of the palace, and threatened destruction to all within.

The attendants of the King saw it necessary to take measures for the safety of his person, but they were marked by indecision and confusion. A force was hastily gathered of two or three hundred gentlemen, who, it was proposed, should mount the horses of the royal stud, and escort the King to Rambouillet, out of this scene of confusion.* The *Gardes de Corps*, with such assistance, might certainly have forced their way through a mob of the tumultuary description which surrounded them; and the escape of the King from Versailles, under circumstances so critical, might have had a great effect in changing the current of popular feeling. But those opinions prevailed, which recommended that he should abide the arrival of La Fayette with the civic force of Paris.

It was now night, and the armed rabble of both sexes showed no intention of departing or breaking up. On the contrary, they bivouacked after their own manner upon the parade, where the soldiers usually mustered. There they kindled large fires, ate, drank, sang, caroused, and occasionally discharged their fire-arms. Scuffles arose from time to time, and one or two of the *Gardes de Corps* had been killed and wounded in the quarrel, which the rioters had endeavoured to fasten on them; besides which, this devoted corps had sustained a volley from their late guests, the National Guard of Versailles. The horse of a *Garde de Corps*, which fell into the hands of these female demons, was killed, torn in pieces, and eaten half raw and half roasted. Every thing seemed tending to a general engagement, when late at night the drums announced the approach of La Fayette at the head of his civic army, which moved slowly but in good order.

The presence of this great force seemed to restore a portion of tranquillity, though no one seemed to know with certainty how it was likely to act. La Fayette had an audience of the King, explained the means he had adopted for the security of the palace, recommended to the inhabitants to go to rest, and unhappily set the example by retiring himself. Before doing so, however, he also visited the Assembly, pledged himself for the safety of the royal family and the tranquillity of the night, and, with some difficulty, prevailed on the *Prem*

* This was proposed by that Marquis de Favras, whose death upon the gallows for a royalist plot, gave afterwards such exquisite delight to the citizens of Paris. Being the first man of quality whom they had seen hanged, (that punishment having been hitherto reserved for plebeians,) they encored the performance, and would fain have hung him up a second time. The same unfortunate gentleman had previously proposed to secure the bridge at Sevres with a body of cavalry, which would have prevented the women from advancing to Versailles. The Queen signed an order for the horses with this remarkable clause.—"To be used if the King's safety is endangered, but in no danger which affects me only."

dent Mounier to adjourn the sitting, which had been voted permanent. He thus took upon himself the responsibility for the quiet of the night. We are loath to bring into question the worth, honour, and fidelity of La Fayette; and we can therefore only lament, that weariness should have so far overcome him at an important crisis, and that he should have trusted to others the execution of those precautions, which were most grossly neglected.

A band of the rioters found means to penetrate into the palace about three in the morning, through a gate which was left unlocked and unguarded. They rushed to the Queen's apartment, and bore down the few *Gardes de Corps* who hastened to her defence. The sentinel knocked at the door of her bed-chamber, called to her to escape, and then gallantly exposed himself to the fury of the murderers. His single opposition was almost instantly overcome, and he himself left for dead. Over his bleeding body they forced their way into the Queen's apartment; but their victim, reserved for farther and worse woes, had escaped by a secret passage into the chamber of the King, while the assassins, bursting in, stabbed the bed she had just left with pikes and swords.*

The *Gardes de Corps* assembled in what was called the *Oeil de Bœuf*, and endeavoured there to defend themselves; but several, unable to gain this place of refuge, were dragged down into the court-yard, where a wretch, distinguished by a long beard, a broad bloody axe, and a species of armour which he wore on his person, had taken on himself, by taste and choice, the office of executioner. The strangeness of the villain's costume, the sanguinary relish with which he discharged his office, and the hoarse roar with which from time to time he demanded new victims, made him resemble some demon whom hell had vomited forth, to augment the wickedness and horror of the scene.†

Two of the *Gardes de Corps* were already beheaded, and the Man with the Beard was clamorous to do his office upon the others who had been taken, when La Fayette, roused from his repose, arrived at the head of a body of grenadiers of the old French guards, who had been lately incorporated with the civic guard, and were probably the most efficient part of his force. He did not think of avenging the unfortunate gentlemen, who lay murdered before his eyes for the discharge of their military duty, but he entreated his soldiers to save him the dishonour of breaking his word, which he had pledged to the King, that he would protect the *Gardes de Corps*. It is probable he attempted no more than was in his power, and so far acted wisely, if not generously.

To redeem Monsieur de la Fayette's pledge, the grenadiers did, what they ought to have done in the name of the King, the law, the nation, and insulted humanity,—they cleared, and with perfect ease, the court of the palace from these bands of murderous bacchantes, and their male associates. The instinct of ancient feelings was in some degree awakened in the grenadiers. They experienced a sudden sensation of compassion and kindness for the *Gardes de Corps*, whose duty on the royal person they had in former times shared. There arose a cry among them,—“Let us save the *Gardes de Corps*, who saved us at Fontenoy.” They took them under their protection, exchanged their caps

* One of the most accredited calumnies against the unfortunate Marie Antoinette pretends, that she was on this occasion surprised in the arms of a paramour. Buonaparte is said to have mentioned this as a fact, upon the authority of Madame Campan. We have now Madame Campan's own account, describing the conduct of the Queen on this dreadful occasion as that of a heroine, and totally excluding the possibility of the pretended anecdote. But let it be farther considered, under what circumstances the Queen was placed—at two in the morning, retired to a privacy liable to be interrupted (as it was) not only by the irruption of the furious banditti who surrounded the palace, demanding her life, but by the entrance of the King, or of others, in whom circumstances might have rendered the intrusion duty; and let it then be judged whether the dangers of the moment, and the risk of discovery, would not have prevented Messalina herself from choosing such a time for an assignation.

† The miscreant's real name was Jourdain, afterwards called *Coupe-tête*, distinguished in the massacres of Avignon. He gained his bread by sitting as an academy-model to painters, and for that reason cultivated his long beard. In the depositions before the Chatelet, he is called *L'homme à la barbe*,—an epithet which might distinguish the ogre or goblin of some ancient legend.

with them in sign of friendship and fraternity, and a tumult, which had something of the character of joy, succeeded to that which had announced nothing but blood and death.

The outside of the palace was still besieged by the infuriated mob, who demanded, with hideous cries, and exclamations the most barbarous and obscene, to see the Austrian, as they called the Queen. The unfortunate Princess appeared on the balcony with one of her children in each hand. A voice from the crowd called out, "No children!" as if on purpose to deprive the mother of that appeal to humanity, which might move the hardest heart. Marie Antoinette, with a force of mind worthy of Maria Theresa, her mother, pushed her children back into the room, and, turning her face to the tumultuous multitude, which tossed and roared beneath, brandishing their pikes and guns with the wildest attitudes of rage, the reviled, persecuted, and denounced Queen stood before them, her arms folded on her bosom, with a noble air of courageous resignation. The secret reason of this summons—the real cause of repelling the children—could only be to afford a chance of some desperate hand among the crowd executing the threats which resounded on all sides. Accordingly, a gun was actually levelled, but one of the bystanders struck it down; for the passions of the mob had taken an opposite turn, and, astonished at Marie Antoinette's noble presence, and graceful firmness of demeanour, there arose, almost in spite of themselves, a general shout of *Vive la Reine!**

But if the insurgents, or rather those who prompted them, missed their first point, they did not also lose their second. A cry arose, "To Paris!" at first uttered by a solitary voice, but gathering strength, until the whole multitude shouted, "To Paris—to Paris!" The cry of these blood-thirsty bacchanals, such as they had that night shown themselves, was, it seems, considered as the voice of the people, and as such, La Fayette neither remonstrated himself, nor permitted the King to interpose a moment's delay in yielding obedience to it; nor was any measure taken to put some appearance even of decency on the journey, or to disguise its real character, of a triumphant procession of the sovereign people, after a complete victory over their nominal monarch.

The carriages of the royal family were placed in the middle of an immeasurable column, consisting partly of La Fayette's soldiers, partly of the revolutionary rabble whose march had preceded his, amounting to several thousand men and women of the lowest and most desperate description, intermingling in groups amongst the bands of French guards, and civic soldiers, whose discipline could not enable them to preserve even a semblance of order. Thus they rushed along, howling their songs of triumph. The harbingers of the march bore the two bloody heads of the murdered *Gardes de Corps* paraded on pikes, at the head of the column, as the emblems of their prowess and success.† The rest of this body, worn down by fatigue, most of them despoiled of their arms, and many without hats, anxious for the fate of the royal family, and harassed with apprehensions for themselves, were dragged like captives in the midst of the mob, while the drunken females around them bore aloft in triumph their arms, their belts, and their hats. These wretches, stained with the blood in which they had bathed themselves, were now singing songs, of which the burthen bore,—"We bring you the baker, his wife, and the little apprentice;" as if the presence of the unhappy royal family, with the little power they now possessed, had been in itself a charm against scarcity. Some of these Amazons rode upon the cannon, which made a formidable part of the procession. Many of them were mounted on the horses of the *Gardes de Corps*, some in masculine fashion, others *en croupe*. All the muskets and pikes which attended this immense

* *Memoires de Weber*, vol. II. p. 457.

† It has been said they were borne immediately before the royal carriage; but this is an exaggeration where exaggeration is unnecessary. These bloody trophies preceded the royal family a great way on the march to Paris.

cavalcade, were garnished, as if in triumph, with oak boughs, and the women carried long poplar branches in their hands, which gave the column, so grotesquely composed in every respect, the appearance of a moving grove. Scarce a circumstance was omitted which could render this entrance into the capital more insulting to the King's feelings—more degrading to the royal dignity.

After six hours of dishonour and agony, the unfortunate Louis was brought to the Hotel de Ville, where Bailli, then mayor, complimented him upon the "*beau jour*," the "splendid day," which restored the monarch of France to his capital; assured him that order, peace, and all the gentler virtues, were about to revive in the country under his royal eye, and that the King would henceforth become powerful through the people, the people happy through the King; and "what was truest of all," that as Henry IV. had entered Paris by means of reconquering his people, Louis XVI. had done so, because his people had reconquered their King.* His wounds salved with this lip-comfort, the unhappy and degraded Prince was at length permitted to retire to the Palace of the Tuilleries, which, long uninhabited, and almost unfurnished, yawned upon him like the tomb where alone he at length found repose.

The events of the 14th July, 1789, when the Bastille was taken, formed the first great stride of the Revolution, actively considered. Those of the 5th and 6th of October, in the same year, which we have detailed at length, as peculiarly characteristic of the features which it assumed, made the second grand phasis. The first had rendered the inhabitants of the metropolis altogether independent of their sovereign, and indeed of any government but that which they chose to submit to; the second deprived the King of that small appearance of freedom which he had hitherto exercised, and fixed his dwelling in the midst of his metropolis, independent and self-regulated as we have described it. "It is wonderful," said Louis, "that with such love of liberty on all sides, I am the only person that is deemed totally unworthy of enjoying it." Indeed, after the march from Versailles, the King could only be considered as the signet of royal authority, used for attesting public acts at the pleasure of those in whose custody he was detained, but without the exercise of any free-will on his own part.

All the various parties found their account, less or more, in this state of the royal person, excepting the pure royalists, whose effective power was little, and their comparative numbers few. There remained, indeed, attached to the person and cause of Louis, a party of those members, who, being friends to freedom, were no less so to regulated monarchy, and who desired to fix the throne on a firm and determined basis. But their numbers were daily thinned, and their spirits were broken. The excellent Mounier, and the eloquent Lally Tolendahl, emigrated after the 9th October, unable to endure the repetition of such scenes as were then exhibited. The indignant adieus of the latter to the National Assembly, were thus forcibly expressed:—

"It is impossible for me, even my physical strength alone considered, to discharge my functions amid the scenes we have witnessed.—Those heads borne in trophy; that Queen half assassinated; that King dragged into Paris by troops of robbers and assassins; the 'splendid day' of Monsieur Bailli; the jests of Barnave, when blood was floating around us; Mounier escaping, as if by miracle, from a thousand assassins; these are the causes of my oath never again to enter that den of cannibals. A man may endure a single death; he may brave it more than once, when the loss of life can be useful—but no power under Heaven shall induce me to suffer a thousand tortures every passing minute

* *Memoires de Bailli. Choix de ses Lettres et Discours.* The Mayor of Paris, although such language must have sounded like the most bitter irony, had no choice of words on the 6th October, 1789. But if he seriously termed that a glorious day, what could Bailli complain of the studious insults and cruelties which he himself sustained, when, in October, 1792, the same banditti of Paris, who forced the King from Versailles, dragged himself to death, with every circumstance of refined cruelty and protracted insult?

—while I am witnessing the progress of cruelty—the triumph of guilt—which I must witness without interrupting it. They may proscribe my person—they may confiscate my fortune—I will labour the earth for my bread, and I will see them no more.”

The other parties into which the state was divided, saw the events of the 5th October with other feelings, and if they did not forward, at least found their account in them.

The Constitutional party, or those who desired a democratical government with a King at its head, had reason to hope that Louis, being in Paris, must remain at their absolute disposal, separated from those who might advise counter-revolutionary steps, and guarded only by national troops, embodied in the name, and through the powers, of the Revolution. Every day, indeed, rendered Louis more dependent on La Fayette and his friends, as the only force which remained to preserve order; for he soon found it a necessary though a cruel measure to disband his faithful *Gardes de Corps*, and that perhaps as much with a view to their safety as to his own.

The Constitutional party seemed strong both in numbers and reputation. La Fayette was commandant of the National Guards, and they looked up to him with that homage and veneration with which young troops, and especially of this description, regard a leader of experience and bravery, who, in accepting the command, seems to share his laurels with the citizen-soldier, who has won none of his own. Bailli was Mayor of Paris, and, in the height of a popularity not undeserved, was so well established in the minds of the better class of citizens, that, in any other times than those when he lived, he might safely have despised the suffrages of the rabble, always to be bought, either by largesses, or flattery. The Constitutionals had also a strong majority in the Assembly, where the Republicans dared not yet throw off the mask, and the Assembly, following the person of the King, came also to establish its sittings in their stronghold, the metropolis. They seemed, therefore, to assume the ascendancy in the first instance, after the 5th and 6th of October, and to reap all the first fruits of the victory then achieved, though by their connivance rather than their active co-operation.

It is wonderful, that, meaning still to assign to the regal dignity a high constitutional situation, La Fayette should not have exerted himself to preserve its dignity undegraded, and to save the honour, as he certainly saved the lives, of the royal family. Three reasons might prevent his doing what, as a gentleman and a soldier, he must otherwise at least have attempted. First, although he boasted highly of his influence with the National Guard of Paris, it may be doubted whether all his popularity would have borne him through in any endeavour to deprive the good people of that city of such a treat as the Joyous Entry of the 6th of October, or whether the civic power would, even for the immediate defence of the King's person, have used actual force against the band of Amazons who directed that memorable procession. Secondly, La Fayette might fear the revival of the fallen colossus of despotism, more than the rising spirit of anarchy, and thus be induced to suppose that a conquest in the King's cause over a popular insurrection, might be too active a cordial to the drooping spirits of the Royalists. And, lastly, the revolutionary general, as a politician, might not be unwilling that the King and his consort should experience, in their own persons, such a specimen of popular power, as might intimidate them from further opposition to the popular will, and incline Louis to assume unresistingly his diminished rank in the new constitution.

The Republican party, with better reason than the Constitutionals, exulted in the King's change of residence. It relieved them as well as Fayette's party from all apprehension of Louis raising his standard in the provinces, and taking the field on his own account, like Charles of England in similar circumstances. Then they already foresaw, that whenever the Constitutionals should identify

themselves with the Crown, whom all parties had hitherto laboured to represent as the common enemy, they would become proportionally unpopular with the people at large, and lose possession of the superior power as a necessary consequence. Aristocrats, the only class which was sincerely united to the King's person, would, they might safely predict, dread and distrust the Constitutionalists, while with the democrats, so very much the more numerous party, the King's name, instead of a tower of strength, as the poet has termed it, must be a stumbling-block and a rock of offence. They foresaw, finally, either that the King must remain the mere passive tool of the Constitutionalists, acting unresistingly under their order,—in which case the office would be soon regarded as an idle and expensive bauble, without any force or dignity of free-will, and fit only to be flung aside as an unnecessary incumbrance on the republican forms,—or, in the event of the King attempting, either by force or escape, to throw off the yoke of the Constitutionalists, he would equally furnish arms to the pure democrats against his person and office, as the source of danger to the popular cause. Some of the republican chiefs had probably expected a more sudden termination to the reign of Louis from an insurrection so threatening; at least these leaders had been the first to hail and to encourage the female insurgents, on their arrival at Versailles.* But though the issue of that insurrection may have fallen short of their hopes, it could not but be highly acceptable to them so far as it went.

The party of Orleans had hitherto wrapt in its dusky folds many of those names, which were afterwards destined to hold dreadful rank in the Revolutionary history. The prince whose name they adopted is supposed to have been animated partly by a strong and embittered spirit of personal hatred against the Queen, and partly, as we have already said, by an ambitious desire to supplant his kinsman. He placed, according to general report, his treasures, and all which his credit could add to them, at the disposal of men, abounding in those energetic talents which carry their owners forward in times of public confusion, but devoid alike of fortune, character, and principle; who undertook to serve their patron by enlisting in his cause the obscure and subordinate agents, by whom mobs were levied, and assassins subsidized. It is said, that the days of the 5th and 6th of October were organized by the secret agents of Orleans, and for his advantage; that had the enterprise succeeded, the King would have been deposed, and the Duke of Orleans proclaimed Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, while his revenge would probably have been satiated with the Queen's assassination. He is stated to have skulked in disguise about the outskirts of the scene when the tumult was at the highest, but never to have had courage to present himself boldly to the people, either to create a sensation by surprise, or to avail himself of that which his satellites had already excited in his favour.† His resolution having thus failed him at the point where it was most necessary, and the tumult having ended without any thing taking place in his favour, the Duke of Orleans was made a scape-goat, and the only one, to atone for the whole insurrection. Under the title of an Embassy to England, he was honourably exiled from his native country. Mirabeau spoke of him in terms of the utmost contumely, as being base-minded as a lackey, and totally unworthy the trouble which had been taken on his account. His other adherents gradually and successively dropped away, in proportion as the wealth, credit, and character of this besotted prince rendered him incapable of maintaining his gratuities; and they sailed henceforth under their own flag, in the storms he had fitted them to navigate. These were men who had resolved to use the revolutionary axe for cutting out their own private fortunes, and, little interesting themselves

* Barnave, as well as Mirabeau, the Republican as well as the Orleanist, was heard to exclaim,—"Courage, brave Parisians—liberty for ever—fear nothing—we are for you!"—*Mémoires de Ferrières, Livre 4me.*

† See the proceedings before the Chatelet.

about the political principles which divided the other parties of the state, they kept firm hold of all the subordinate machinery despised by the others in the abstraction of metaphysical speculation, but which gave them the exclusive command of the physical force of the mob of Paris—Paris, the metropolis of France, and the prison-house of her monarch.

CHAPTER VI.

La Fayette resolves to enforce Order.—A Baker is murdered by the Rabble—One of his Murderers Executed.—Decree imposing Martial Law in case of Insurrection.—Democrats supported by the Audience in the Gallery of the Assembly.—Introduction of the Doctrines of Equality—They are in their exaggerated Sense inconsistent with Human Nature and the Progress of Society.—The Assembly abolish Titles of Nobility, Armorial Bearings, and Phrases of Courtesy—Reasoning on these Innovations.—Disorder of Finance.—Neckar becomes unpopular.—Seizure of Church-Lands.—Issue of Assignats.—Neckar leaves France in unpopularity.—New Religious Institution.—Oath imposed on the Clergy—Resisted by the greater part of the Order—Bad Effects of the Innovation.—General View of the Operations of the Constituent Assembly.—Enthusiasm of the People for their new Privileges.—Limited Privileges of the Crown.—King is obliged to dissemble—His Negotiations with Mirabeau—With Bouillé.—Attack on the Palace of the King—Prevented by Fayette.—Royalists expelled from the Palace of the Tuilleries.—Escape of Louis.—He is captured at Varennes—Brought back to Paris.—Riot in the Champ de Mars—Put down by Military Force.—Louis accepts the Constitution.

LA FAYETTE followed up his victory over the Duke of Orleans by some bold and successful attacks upon the revolutionary right of insurrection, through which the people of late had taken on themselves the office of judges at once and executioners. This had hitherto been thought one of the sacred privileges of the Revolution; but, determined to set bounds to its farther progress, La Fayette resolved to restore the dominion of the law over the will of the rabble.

A large mob, in virtue of the approbation, the indulgence at least, with which similar frolics had been hitherto treated, had seized upon and hanged an unhappy baker, who fell under their resentment as a public enemy, because he sold bread dear when he could only purchase grain at an enormous price. They varied the usual detail with some additional circumstances, causing many of his brethren in trade to salute the bloody head, which they paraded according to their wont; and finally, by pressing the dead lips to those of the widow, as she lay fainting before them. This done, and in the full confidence of impunity, they approached the hall of the Assembly, in order to regale the representatives of the people with the same edifying spectacle.

The baker being neither an aristocrat nor nobleman, the authorities ventured upon punishing the murder, without fearing the charge of *incivisme*. La Fayette, at the head of a detachment of the National Guards, attacked and dispersed the assassins, and the active citizen who carried the head was tried, condemned, and hanged, just as if there had been no revolution in the kingdom. There was much surprise at this, as there had been no such instance of severity since the day of the Bastille. This was not all.

La Fayette, who may now be considered as at the head of affairs, had the influence and address to gain from the Assembly a decree, empowering the magistracy, in case of any rising, to declare martial law by displaying a red flag; after which signal, those who refused to disperse should be dealt with as open

rebels. This edict, much to the purpose of the British Riot Act, did not pass without opposition, as it obviously tended to give the bayonets of the National Guard a decided ascendancy over the pikes and clubs of the rabble of the suburbs. The Jacobins, meaning the followers of Marat, Robespierre, and Danton, and even the Republicans or Brissotines, had hitherto considered these occasional insurrections and murders like affairs of posts in a campaign, in which they themselves had enjoyed uniformly the advantage; but while La Fayette was followed and obeyed by the National Guard, men of substance, and interested in maintaining order, it was clear that he had both the power and will to stop in future these revolutionary excesses.

This important advantage in some degree balanced the power which the republican and revolutionary party had acquired. These predominated, as has been already said, in the Club of Jacobins, in which they reviewed the debates of the Assembly, denouncing at their pleasure those who opposed them; but they had besides a decided majority among the daily attendants in the tribunes, who, regularly paid and supplied with food and liquors, filled the Assembly with their clamours of applause or disapprobation, according to the rules they had previously received. It is true, the hired auditors gave their voices and applause to those who paid them, but nevertheless they had party feelings of their own, which often dictated unbought suffrages, in favour of those who used the most exaggerated tone of revolutionary fury. They shouted with sincere and voluntary zeal for such men as Marat, Robespierre, and Danton, who yelled out for the most bloody measures of terror and proscription, and proclaimed war against the nobles with the same voice with which they flattered the lowest vices of the multitude.

By degrees the Revolution appeared to have assumed a different object from that for which it was commenced. France had obtained liberty, the first, and certainly the worthiest object which a nation can desire. Each individual was declared as free as it was possible for him to be, retaining the least respect to the social compact. It is true, the Frenchman was not practically allowed the benefit of this freedom; for though the Rights of Man permitted the citizen to go where he would, yet, in practice, he was apt to find his way to the next prison unless furnished with a municipal passport, or to be murdered by the way, if accused of aristocracy. In like manner, his house was secure as a castle, his property sacred as the ornaments of a temple;—excepting against the Committee of Research, who might, by their arbitrary order, break into the one and dilapidate the other at pleasure. Still, however, the general principle of Liberty was established in the fullest metaphysical extent, and it remained to place on as broad a footing the sister principle of Equality.

To this the attention of the Assembly was now chiefly directed. In the proper sense, equality of rights and equality of laws, a constitution which extends like protection to the lowest and the highest, are essential to the existence and to the enjoyment of freedom. But to erect a levelling system designed to place the whole mass of the people on the same footing as to habits, manners, tastes, and sentiments, is a gross and ridiculous contradiction of the necessary progress of society. It is a fruitless attempt to wage war with the laws of Nature. She has varied the face of the world with mountain and valley, lake and torrent, forest and champaign, and she has formed the human body in all the different shapes and complexions we behold, with all the various degrees of physical force and weakness. She has avoided equality in all her productions, as she was formerly said to have abhorred a vacuum; even in those of her works which present the greatest apparent similarity, exact equality does not exist; no one leaf of a tree is precisely similar to another, and among the countless host of stars, each differs from the other in glory. But what are these physical varieties to the endless change exhibited in the human character, with all its various passions, powers, and prejudices, so artfully compounded in different

proportions, that it is probable there has not existed, since Adam's time to ours, an exact resemblance between any two individuals? As if this were not enough, there come to aid the diversity, the effects of climate, of government, of education, and habits of life, all of which lead to endless modifications of the individual. The inequalities arising from the natural differences of talent and disposition are multiplied beyond calculation, as society increases in civilization.

The savage may, indeed, boast a rude species of equality in some patriarchal tribes, but the wildest and strongest, the best hunter, and the bravest warrior, soon lords it over the rest, and becomes a king or a chief. One portion of the nation, from happy talents, or happy circumstances, rises to the top, another sinks, like dregs, to the bottom; a third portion occupies a mid place between them. As society advances, the difference of ranks advances with it. And can it be proposed seriously, that any other equality, than that of rights, can exist between those who think and those who labour; those "whose talk is of bullocks," and those whose time permits them to study the paths of wisdom? Happy, indeed, is the country and constitution, where those distinctions, which must necessarily exist in every society, are not separated by insurmountable barriers, but where the most distinguished rank is open to receive that precious supply of wisdom and talent, which so frequently elevates individuals from the lowest to the highest classes; and so far as general equality can be attained, by each individual having a fair right to raise himself to the situation which he is qualified to occupy, by his talents, his merits, or his wealth, the gates cannot be thrown open too widely. But the attempt of the French legislators was precisely the reverse, and went to establish the proposed equality of ranks, by depressing the upper classes into the same order with those who occupy the middle of society, while they essayed the yet more absurd attempt, to crush down these last, by the weight of legislative authority, into a level with the lowest orders,—men whose education, if it has not corrupted their hearts, must necessarily have blunted their feelings, and who, in a great city like Paris, exchange the simplicity which makes them respectable under more favourable circumstances, for the habitual indulgence of the coarsest and grossest pleasures. Upon the whole, it must be admitted, that in every state far advanced in the progress of civilization, the inequality of ranks is a natural and necessary attribute. Philosophy may comfort those who regret this necessity, by the assurance that the portions of individual happiness and misery are divided amongst high and low with a very equal hand; and religion assures us that there is a future state, in which, with amended natures and improved faculties, the vain distinctions of this world will no longer subsist. But any practical attempt to remedy the inequality of rank in civilized society by forcible measures, may indeed degrade the upper classes, but cannot improve those beneath them. Laws may deprive the gentleman of his title, the man of education of his books, or, to use the French illustration, the *maitre* of his clothes; but this cannot make the clown a man of breeding, or give learning to ignorance, or decent attire to the Sans Culottes. Much will be lost to the grace, the information, and the decency of society in general, but nothing can possibly be gained by any individual. Nevertheless, it was in this absolutely impracticable manner, that the exaggerated feelings of the French legislators, at this period of total change, undertook to equalize the nation which they were regenerating.

With a view to this great experiment upon human society, the Assembly abolished all titles of honour, all armorial bearings, and even the insignificant titles of Monsieur and Madame; which, meaning nothing but phrases of common courtesy, yet, with other expressions of the same kind, serve to soften the ordinary intercourse of human life, and preserve that gentleness of manners which the French, by a happy name, were wont to call *La petite morale*. The first of these abrogations affected the nobles in particular. In return for their

liberal and unlimited surrender of their essential powers and privileges, they were now despoiled of their distinction and rank in society;—as if those who had made prisoner and plundered a cavalier, should, last of all, have snatched away in derision the plume from his hat. The aristocracy of France, so long distinguished as the flower of European chivalry, were now, so far as depended on the legislature, entirely abolished. The voice of the nation had pronounced against them a general sentence of degradation, which, according to the feelings of the order, could only be the punishment of some foul and disgraceful crime; and the condition of the ex-nobles might justly have been described as Bolingbroke paints his own,

Eating the bitter bread of banishment,
While you have fed upon my seigniories,
Dispark'd my parks, and fell'd my forest woods,
From my own windows torn my household coat,
Razed out my impress, leaving me no sign,
Save men's opinions and my living blood,
To show the world I was a gentleman.

It was a fatal error, that, in search of that equality which it is impossible to attain, the Assembly should have torn down the ancient institutions of chivalry. Viewing them philosophically, they are indeed of little value; but where are the advantages beyond the means, first, of mere subsistence, secondly, of information, which ought not to be indifferent to true philosophers? And yet, where exists the true philosopher, who has been able effectually to detach himself from the common mode of thinking on such subjects? The estimation set upon birth or rank, supposing its foundation illusory, has still the advantage of counterbalancing that which is attracted by wealth only; the prejudice has something generous and noble in it, is connected with historical recollections and patriotic feelings, and if it sometimes gives rise to extravagances, they are such as society can restrain and punish by the mere effect of ridicule. It is curious, even in the midst of the Revolution, and amongst those who were its greatest favourers, what difficulties were found to emancipate themselves from those ancient prejudices which affected the difference of ranks.*

As for the proscription of the phraseology of civilized society, it had an absurd appearance of affectation in the eyes of most people of understanding; but on some enthusiastic minds it produced a worse effect than that of mere disgust. Let a man place himself in the attitude of fear or of rage, and he will in some measure feel the passion arise in his mind which corresponds with the gesture he has assumed. In like manner, those who affected the brutal manners, coarse language, and slovenly dress of the lower orders, familiarized their imaginations with the violent and savage thoughts and actions proper to the class whose costume they had thus adopted. Above all, when this sacrifice was made to the very taste and phraseology of that class, (the last points in which one would think them deserving of imitation,) it appeared to intimate the progressive strength of the revolutionary tide, which, sweeping before it all distinctions, trivial as well as important, seemed soon destined to overthrow the throne, now isolated and well nigh undefended. The next step was necessarily to fix the executive government in the same body which enjoyed the powers of legislation,—the surest of all roads to tyranny. But although the doctrine of equality, thus understood, is absurd in theory and impossible in practice, yet it will always find willing listeners when preached to the lower classes, whose practical view of it results into an agrarian law, or a general division of property.

There was one order yet remained, however, which was to be levelled,—the

* The Comte de Mirabeau was furious at being called *Riquetti Paine*, and said, with great bitterness, when his speeches were promulgated under that name, "*Avec votre Riquetti, nous avons desorienté l'Europe pour trois jours.*" Mirabeau was at heart an aristocrat. But what shall we say of Citoyenne Roland, who piques herself on the plebeian sound of her name, *Manon Philipon*, yet inconsequently upbraids Citoyen Pache with his father's having been a porter!

destruction of the Church was still to be accomplished; and the Republican party proceeded in the work of demolition with infinite address, by including the great object in a plan for restoring finance, and providing for the expenses of the state, without imposing further burthens on the people.

It must be remembered, that the States-general had been summoned to restore the finances of the country. This was the cause of their convocation. But although they had exercised almost every species of power—had thrown down and rebuilt every constituted authority in the kingdom, still the finances were as much embarrassed as ever, or much more so; since most men in France judged the privilege of refusing to pay taxes, the most unequivocal, and not the least pleasing part, of their newly-acquired freedom.

Neckar, so often received among the populace as a saviour of the country, was here totally at a loss. The whole relative associations which bind men together in the social contract, seemed to be rent asunder; and where public credit is destroyed, a financier, however able, resembles Prospero, after his wand is broken, and his book sunk in the deep sea. Accordingly, Neckar in vain importuned the Assembly, by representing the pressure of the finances. They became wearied with his remonstrances, and received them with manifest symptoms of coldness and disrespect. What service, indeed, could the regulated advice, and deep-calculated and combined schemes of a financier, have rendered to men, who had already their resources in their eye, and were determined that no idle scruple should prevent their pouncing upon them? Neckar's expostulations, addressed to their ears, were like a lecture upon thrift and industry to Robin Hood and his merry-men, when they were setting forth to rob the rich in the name of the poor.

The Assembly had determined, that, all prejudices apart, the property of the Church should come under confiscation for the benefit of the nation. It was in vain that the clergy exclaimed against these acts of rapine and extortion—in vain that they stated themselves as an existing part of the nation, and that as such they had coalesced with the Assembly under the implied ratification of their own rights—in vain that they resounded in the hall the declaration solemnly adopted, that property was inviolable, save upon full compensation. It was to as little purpose that Mirabeau was reminded of his language, addressed to the Emperor Joseph upon a similar occasion.—“Despise the monks,” he had said, “as much as you will, but do not rob them. Robbery is equally a crime, whether perpetrated on the most profligate atheist, or the most bigoted capuchin.” The clergy were told with insulting gravity, that the property belonging to a community was upon a different footing from that belonging to individuals, because the state might dissolve the community or body-corporate, and resume the property attached to it; and, under this sophism, they assumed for the benefit of the public the whole right of property belonging to the Church of France.

As it was impossible to bring these immense subjects at once to sale, the Assembly adopted a system of paper-money called *Assignats*, which were secured or hypothecated upon the church-lands. The fluctuation of this paper, which was adopted against Neckar's earnest cautions, created a spirit of stock-jobbing and gambling, nearly resembling that which distinguished the famous scheme of the Mississippi. Spelman would have argued, that the taint of sacrilege attached to funds raised upon the spoils of the church; yet it must be admitted that these supplies enabled the National Assembly not only to avoid the gulf of general bankruptcy, but to dispense with many territorial exactions which pressed hard on the lower orders, and to give relief and breath to that most useful portion of the community. These desirable results, however, flowed from that divine alchemy which calls good out of evil, without affording a justification to the perpetrators of the latter.

Shortly after the adoption of this plan, embraced against his opinion and his

remonstrances, Neckar saw his services were no longer acceptable to the Assembly, and that he could not be useful to the King. He tendered his resignation, which was received with cold indifference by the Assembly; and even his safety was endangered on his return to his native country, by the very people who had twice hailed him as their deliverer. This accomplished statesman discovered too late, that public opinion requires to be guided and directed towards the ends of public good, which it will not reach by its own unassisted and misdirected efforts; and that his own popularity had only been the stalking-horse, through means of which, men less honest, and more subtle than himself, had taken aim at their own objects.

But the majority of the National Assembly had yet another and even a more violent experiment to try upon the Gallican Church establishment. It was one which touched the consciences of the French clergy in the same degree as the former affected their fortunes, and was so much the less justifiable, that it is difficult to suggest any motive except the sweeping desire to introduce novelty in every department of the state, and to have a constitutional clergy as they had a constitutional King, which should have instigated them to such a measure.

When the Assembly had decreed the assumption of the church-lands, it remained to be settled on what foundation religion was to be placed within the kingdom. A motion was made for decreeing, that the Holy Apostolical religion was that of France, and that its worship alone should be permitted. A Carthusian monk, named Dom Gerle, made this proposal, alarmed too late lest the popular party, to which he had so long adhered, should now be about to innovate in the matters of the Church, as they had already in those of the state. The debate was conducted with decency for one day, but on the second the hall of the Assembly was surrounded by a large and furious multitude, who insulted, beat, and maltreated all who were known to favour the measure under consideration. It was represented within the house, that the passing the decree proposed would be the signal for a religious war; and Dom Gerle withdrew his motion in terror and despair.

The success of this opposition showed, that almost any experiment on the Church might be tried with effect, since the religion which it taught seemed no longer to interest the national legislators. A scheme was brought forward, in which the public worship (*culte publique*) as it was affectedly termed, without any addition of reverence, (as if to give it the air of a mere code of formal enactments,) was provided for on the narrowest and most economical plan. But this was not all. A civil constitution was by the same code framed for the clergy, declaring them totally independent of the See of Rome, and vesting the choice of bishops in the departmental authorities. To this constitution each priest and prelate was required to adhere by a solemn oath. A subsequent decree of the Assembly declared forfeiture of his benefice against whomsoever should hesitate; but the clergy of France showed in that trying moment that they knew how to choose betwixt sinning against their conscience, and suffering wrong at the hands of man. Their dependence on the See of Rome was a part of their creed, an article of their faith, which they would not compromise. The noble attitude of firmness and self-denial adopted by prelates and richly-beneficed clergymen, who had hitherto been thought more governed by levities of every kind than by regard to their profession, commanded for a time the respect of the Assembly, silenced the blasphemies of the hired assistants in the tribunes, and gave many to fear that, in depriving the Church of its earthly power, the Assembly might but give them means to extend their spiritual dominion more widely, and awake an interest in their fate which slumbered during their prosperity. "Beware what you do," said Montlosier. "You may expel the bishop from his episcopal residence, but it will be only to open to him the cabins of the poor. If you take from his hands the cross of gold, he will display a cross of wood; and it was by a cross of wood that the world was saved."

Summoned one by one to take the oath, or refuse it under the consequences menaced, the Assembly, fearful of the effect of their firmness, would scarce hear these sufferers speak a syllable, save Yes or No. Their tumult on the occasion resembled the beating of drums to drown the last words of a martyr. Few, indeed, were the priests who accepted the Constitutional oath. There were in the number only three bishops. One had been a person of note—it was that Archbishop of Sens—that very Cardinal, whose mal-administration of fifteen months had led to this mighty change. Another of the three Constitutional prelates was destined to be much more remarkable—it was the celebrated Talleyrand, whose talents as a statesman have been so distinguished.

The National Assembly failed totally in their attempts to found a national Church. The priests who took the oaths received neither reverence nor affection, and were only treated with decency by such as considered religion in the light of an useful political institution. They were alike despised by the sincere Catholic, and the declared infidel. All of real religious feeling or devotion that was left in France turned towards their ancient pastors, and though the impulse was not strong enough to counteract the revolutionary movement, it served on many occasions to retard and embarrass it. The experiment which had thus signally miscarried, was indeed as impolitic as it was unnecessary. It can only be imputed, on the one hand, to the fanaticism of the modern philosophers, who expected by this indirect course to have degraded the Christian religion; and, on the other, to the preconceived determination of the Revolutionists, that no consideration should interfere with the plan of new-modelling the nation through all its institutions, as well of church as of state.

Victorious at once over altar and throne, mitre and coronet, King, Nobles, and Clergy, the National Assembly seemed in fact to possess, and to exert, that omnipotence, which has been imputed to the British Parliament. Never had any legislature made such extensive and sweeping changes, and never were such changes so easily accomplished. The nation was altered in all its relations; its flag and its emblems were changed—every thing of a public character was destroyed and replaced, down to the very title of the sovereign, who, no longer termed King of France and Navarre, was now called King of the French. The names and divisions of the provinces, which had existed for many years, were at once obliterated, and were supplied by a geographical partition of the territory into eighty-three departments, subdivided into six hundred districts, and these again portioned out into forty-eight thousand communities or municipalities. By thus recasting as it were the whole geographical relations of the separate territories of which France consisted, the Abbé Sieyès designed to obliterate former recollections and distinctions, and to bring every thing down to the general level of liberty and equality. But it had an effect beyond what was proposed. While the provinces existed they had their separate capitals, their separate privileges; and those capitals, though in a subordinate rank, being yet the seats of provincial parliaments, had a separate consequence, inferior to, but yet distinct, from, that of Paris. But when France became one single province, the importance of its sole capital, Paris, was increased to a most formidable degree; and during the whole Revolution, and through all its changes, whatever party held the metropolis was sure speedily to acquire the supreme power through the whole departments; and woe to those who made the fruitless attempt to set the sense or feelings of the nation in opposition to those of the capital! Republican or royalist was equally sure to perish in the rash attempt.

The Parliaments of France, long the strong-holds of liberty, now perished unnoticed, as men pull down old houses to clear the ground for modern edifices. The sale of offices of justice was formally abolished; the power of nominating the judges was taken from the crown; the trial by jury, with inquests of accusation and conviction, corresponding to the grand and petty juries of England,

were sanctioned and established. In thus clearing the channels of public justice, dreadfully clogged as they had become during the decay of the monarchy, the National Assembly rendered the greatest possible services to France, the good effects of which will long be felt. Other alterations were of a more doubtful character. There might be immediate policy, but there was certainly much harshness, in wresting from the crown the power of granting pardons. If this was for fear lest grace should be extended to those condemned for the new crime of leze-nation, or treason against the Constitution, the legislators might have remembered how seldom the King dares to exercise this right of mercy in favour of an unpopular criminal. It requires no small courage to come betwixt the dragon and his wrath, the people and their victim. Charles I. dared not save Strafford.

The National Assembly also recognized the freedom of the press; and, in doing so, conferred on the nation a gift fraught with much good and some evil, capable of stimulating the worst passions, and circulating the most atrocious calumnies, and occasioning frequently the most enormous deeds of cruelty and injustice; but ever bearing along with it the means of curing the very evils caused by its abuses, and of transmitting to futurity the sentiments of the good and the wise, so invaluable when the passions are silenced, and the calm slow voice of reason and reflection comes to obtain a hearing. The press stimulated massacres and proscriptions during the frightful period which we are approaching; but the press has also held up to horror the memory of the perpetrators, and exposed the artifices by which the actors were instigated. It is a rock on which a vessel may be, indeed, and is often wrecked; but that same rock affords the foundation of the brightest and noblest beacon.

We might add to the weight of benefits which France unquestionably owes to the Constituent Assembly, that they restored liberty of conscience by establishing universal toleration. But against this benefit must be set the violent imposition of the Constitutional oath upon the Catholic clergy, which led afterwards to such horrible massacres of innocent and reverend victims, murdered in defiance of those rules of toleration, which, rather in scorn of religion of any kind than regard to men's consciences, the Assembly had previously adopted.

Faithful to their plan of forming not a popular monarchy, but a species of royal republic, and stimulated by the real republicans, whose party was daily gaining ground among their ranks, as well as by the howls and threats of those violent and outrageous demagogues, who, from the seats they had adopted in the Assembly, were now known by the name of the Mountain, the framers of the Constitution had rendered it democratical in every point, and abridged the royal authority, till its powers became so dim and obscure as to merit Burke's happy illustration, when he exclaimed, speaking of the new-modelled French government,—

“ ——— What seem'd its head,
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.”

The Crown was deprived of all appointments to civil offices, which were filled up by popular elections, the Constitutionals being in this respect faithful to their own principles, which made the will of the people the source of all power. Never was such an immense patronage vested in the body of any nation at large, and the arrangement was politic in the immediate sense, as well as in conformity with the principles of those who adopted it; for it attached to the new Constitution the mass of the people, who felt themselves elevated from villanage into the exercise of sovereign power. Each member of the elective assembly of a municipality, through whose collective votes bishops, administrators, judges, and other official persons received their appointments, felt for the moment the importance which his privilege bestowed, and recognized in his own person, with corresponding self-complacency, a fraction, however small, of the immense community, now governed by those whom they themselves elected into office.

The charm of power is great at all times, but exquisite to intoxication to those to whom it is a novelty.

Called to the execution of these high duties, which hitherto they had never dreamed of, the people at large became enamoured of their own privileges, carried them into every department of society, and were legislators and debaters in season and out of season. The exercise even of the extensive privilege committed to them, seemed too limited to these active citizens. The Revolution appeared to have turned the heads of the whole lower classes, and those who had hitherto thought least of political rights, were now seized with the fury of deliberating, debating, and legislating, in all possible times and places. The soldiers on guard debated at the Oratoire—the journeymen tailors held a popular assembly at the Colonnade—the peruke-makers met at the Champs-Élysées. In spite of the opposition of the National Guard, three thousand shoemakers deliberated on the price of shoes in the Place Louis Quinze; every house of call was converted into the canvassing hall of a political body; and France for a time presented the singular picture of a country, where every one was so much involved in public business, that he had little leisure to attend to his own.

There was, besides, a general disposition to assume and practise the military profession; for the right of insurrection having been declared sacred, each citizen was to be prepared to discharge effectually so holy a duty. The citizens procured muskets to defend their property—the rabble obtained pikes to invade that of others—the people of every class everywhere possessed themselves of arms, and the most peaceful burgesses were desirous of the honours of the epaulette. The children, with mimicry proper to their age, formed battalions on the streets, and the spirit in which they were formed was intimated by the heads of cats borne upon pikes in front of the juvenile revolutionists.*

In the departments, the fever of legislation was the same. Each district had its permanent committee, its committee of police, its military committee, civil committee, and committee of subsistence. Each committee had its president, its vice-president, and its secretaries. Each district was desirous of exercising legislative authority, each committee of usurping the executive power.† Amid these subordinate conclaves, every theme of eulogy and enthusiasm referred to the revolution which had made way for the power they enjoyed, every subject of epidemic alarm to the most distant return towards the ancient system which had left the people in insignificance. Rumour found a ready audience for every one of her thousand tongues; Discord a prompt hand, in which she might place each of her thousand snakes.

The affiliation, as it was called, or close correspondence of the Jacobin Clubs in all their ramifications, tended to influence this political fever, and to direct its fury against the last remains of royalty. Exaggerated and unfounded reports of counter-revolutionary plots and aristocratical conspiracies, not a little increased by the rash conversation and impotent efforts of the nobility in some districts, were circulated with the utmost care; and the falsehood which had been confuted at Paris, received new currency in the departments, as that which was of departmental growth was again circulated with eagerness in the metropolis. Thus, the minds of the people were perpetually kept in a state of excitation, which is not without its pleasures. They are of a nature peculiarly incompatible with soundness in judgment and moderation in action, but favourable in the same degree to audacity of thought, and determination in execution.

The royal prerogative of the King, so closely watched, was in appearance formidable enough to be the object of jealousy and suspicion, but in reality a mere pageant which possessed no means either of attack or resistance. The King was said to be the organ of the executive power, yet he had named but a small proportion of the officers in the army and navy, and those who received

* *Memoires du Marquis des Ferrieres, Livre III.*

† *Memoires de Bailli, 16 Aout.*

their appointments from a source so obnoxious, possessed little credit amongst those whom they commanded. He was the nominal head of six ministers, who were perpetually liable to be questioned by the Assembly, in which they might be called to defend themselves as criminals, but had no seat or vote to enable them to mingle in its debates. This was, perhaps, one of the greatest errors of the constitution; for the relation which the ministers bore to the legislative body, was of such a limited and dependent nature as excluded all ideas of confidence and cordiality. The King's person was said to be inviolable, but the frowning brows of a large proportion of his subjects, their public exclamations, and the pamphlets circulated against him, intimated very different doctrine. He might propose to the Assembly the question of peace or war, but it remained with them to decide upon it. Lastly, the King had the much-grudged privilege of putting a veto on any decree of the legislative body, which was to have the effect of suspending the passing of the law until the proposition had been renewed in two successive Assemblies; after which the royal sanction was held as granted. This mode of arresting the progress of any favourite law was likely to be as dangerous to the sovereign in its exercise, as the attempt to stop a carriage by catching hold of the wheel. In fact, whenever the King attempted to use this sole relique of monarchical power, he risked his life, and it was by doing so that he at length forfeited it. Among these mutilated features of sovereignty, it is scarce worth while to mention, that the King's effigy was still struck upon the public coin, and his name prefixed to public edicts.

Small as was the share of public power which the new Constitution of France afforded to the Crown, Louis, in outward semblance at least, appeared satisfied. He made it a rule to adopt the advice of the Assembly on all occasions, and to sanction every decree which was presented to him. He accepted even that which totally changed the constitution of the Gallican church. He considered himself doubtless as under forcible restraint, ever since he had been dragged in triumph from Versailles to Paris, and therefore complied with what was proposed to him, under the tacit protest that his acquiescence was dictated by force and fear. His palace was guarded by eight hundred men, with two pieces of cannon; and although this display of force was doubtless intended by La Fayette to assure Louis's personal safety, yet it was no less certain that it was designed also to prevent his escape from the metropolis. The King had, therefore, good cause to conceive himself possessed of the melancholy privilege of a prisoner, who cannot incur any legal obligation by acts which do not flow from free-will, and therefore finds a resource against oppression in the incapacities which attend it. It was, however, carrying this privilege to the verge of dissimulation, nay, beyond it, when* the King went, apparently freely and voluntarily, down to the National Assembly, and, in a dignified and touching speech, (could it have been thought a sincere one,) accepted the Constitution, made common cause with the regenerated nation, and declared himself the head of the Revolution. Constrained as he was by circumstances, anxious for his own safety, and that of his family, the conduct of Louis must not be too severely criticized, but this step was unkingly as well as impolitic; and the unfortunate monarch gained nothing by abasing himself to the deceit which he practised at the urgency of his ministers, excepting the degradation attending a deception, by which none are deceived. No one, when the heat of the first enthusiasm was over, gave the King credit for sincerity in his acceptance of the Constitution; the Royalists were revolted, and the Revolutionists could only regard the speech and accession as the acts of royal hypocrisy. Louis was openly spoken of as a prisoner; and the public voice, in a thousand different forms, announced that his life would be the penalty of any attempt to his deliverance.

Meanwhile, the King endeavoured to work out his escape from Paris and

* 4th February 1790.

the Revolution at once, by the means of two separate agents in whom alone he confided.

The first was no other than Mirabeau, that very Mirabeau who had contributed so much to the Revolution, but who, an aristocrat at heart, and won over to the royal party by high promises of wealth and advancement, at length laboured seriously to undo his own work. His plan was, to use the Assembly itself, in which his talents, eloquence, and audacity, gave him so much influence, as the means of re-establishing the royal authority. He proposed, as the final measure, that the King should retire from Paris to Metz, then under the government of the Marquis de Bouillé, and he conceived his own influence in the Assembly to be such, that he could have drawn thither, upon some reasonable terms of accommodation, a great majority of the members. It is certain he had the highest ascendancy which any individual orator exercised over that body, and was the only one who dared to retort threats and defiance to the formidable Jacobins. "I have resisted military and ministerial despotism," said he, when opposing a proposed law against the emigrants; "can it be supposed I will yield to that of a Club?"—"By what right," exclaimed Goupil, "does Mirabeau act as a dictator in the Assembly?"—"Goupil," replied Mirabeau, "is as much mistaken when he calls me a dictator, as formerly when he termed me a Catiline."—The indignant roar of the Jacobins bellowing from their boasted Mountain, in vain endeavoured to interrupt him.—"Silence these thirty voices," said Mirabeau, at the full pitch of his thundering voice; and the volcano was silent at his bidding. Yet, possessed as he was of this mighty power, Mirabeau did not, perhaps, reflect how much less it would have availed him on the royal side, than when he sailed with all the wind and tide which the spirit of a great and general revolution could lend him. He was a man, too, as remarkable for his profligacy as his wonderful talents, and the chance which the King must have risked in embarking with him, was like that of the prince in the tale, who escaped from a desert island by embarking on board a skiff drifting among dangerous eddies, and rowed by a figure half human and half tiger.* The experiment was prevented by the sudden and violent illness and death of Mirabeau, who fell a victim to his debaucheries. His death was greatly lamented, though it is probable that, had the Apostle of the Revolution lived much longer, he would either have averted its progress, or his dissevered limbs would have ornamented the pikes of those multitudes, who, as it was, followed him to the grave with weapons trailed, and howling and lamentation."†

The King's other confidant was the Marquis de Bouillé, a person entirely different from Mirabeau. He was a French soldier of the old stamp, a royalist by birth and disposition; had gained considerable fame during the American war, and at the time of the Revolution was governor of Metz and Alsace. Bouillé was endowed with a rare force of character, and proved able, without having recourse to disguise of any kind, to keep the garrison of Metz in tolerable discipline during the general dissolution of the army. The state of military insubordination was so great, that La Fayette, and his party in the Assembly, not only hesitated to dismiss a General who was feared and obeyed by the regiments under his command, but, royalist as he was, they found themselves obliged to employ the Marquis de Bouillé and his troops in subduing the formidable revolt of three regiments quartered at Nancy, which he accomplished with complete success, and such slaughter among the insurgents, as was likely to recommend subordination in future. The Republican party of course gave

* Mirabeau bore much of his character imprinted on his person and features. He was short, bull-necked, and very strongly made. A quantity of thick, matted hair hung round features of a coarse and exaggerated character, strongly scarred and seamed. "Figure to your mind," he said, describing his own countenance to a lady who knew him not, "a tiger who has had the small pox." When he talked of confronting his opponents in the Assembly, his favourite phrase was, "I will show them *La Hure*," that is, the boar's head, meaning his own tusked and shaggy countenance.

† He died 28th March 1791.

this act of authority the name of a massacre of the people, and even the Assembly at large, though Bouillé acted in consequence of their authority, saw with anxiety the increased importance of an avowed Royalist. La Fayette, who was Bouillé's relation, spared no pains to gain him to the Constitutional side, while Bouillé avowed publicly that he only retained his command in obedience to the King, and in the hope of serving him.

With this general, who had as yet preserved an authority that was possessed by no other Royalist in France, the King entered into a close though secret correspondence in cypher, which turned chiefly on the best mode of facilitating the escape of the royal family from Paris, where late incidents had rendered his abode doubly odious, and doubly dangerous.

La Fayette's strength consisted in his popularity with the middle classes of the Parisians, who, in the character of National Guards, looked up to him as their commandant, and in general obeyed his orders in dispersing those tumultuous assemblies of the lower orders, which threatened danger to persons and property. But La Fayette, though fixed in his principle to preserve monarchy as a part of the constitution, seems to have been always on cold and distrustful terms with the monarch personally. He was perpetually trying his own feelings, and those whom he influenced, by the thermometer, and became alarmed if his own loyalty or theirs arose above the most tepid degree.

Two marked incidents served to show that the civic guard were even less warm than their commandant in zeal for the royal person.

The National Guard, headed by La Fayette, together with the edict respecting martial law, had, as we have observed, greatly contributed to the restoration of order in Paris, by checking, and dispersing, upon various occasions, those disorderly assemblies of rioters, whose violence and cruelty had dishonoured the commencement of the Revolution. But the spirit which raised these commotions was unabated, and was carefully nourished by the Jacobins and all their subordinate agents, whose popularity lay among the rabble, as that of the Constitutionalists did with the citizens. Among the current falsehoods of the day, arose a report that the old Castle of Vincennes, situated about three miles from Paris, was to be used as a state prison in place of the Bastille. A large mob marched from the suburb called Saint Antoine, the residence of a great number of labourers of the lowest order, already distinguished by its zeal for the revolutionary doctrines.* They were about to commence the destruction of the ancient castle, when the vigilant commandant of Paris arrived and dispersed them, not without bloodshed. In the meantime, the few Royalists whom Paris still contained, became alarmed lest this tumult, though beginning in another quarter, might be turned against the person of the King. For his protection about three hundred gentlemen repaired to the Tuilleries, armed with sword-canes, short swords, pistols, and such other weapons as could be best concealed about their persons, as they went through the streets. Their services and zeal were graciously acknowledged by the unfortunate Louis, little accustomed of late to such marks of devotion. But when La Fayette returned to the palace, at the head of his grenadiers of the National Guard, he seems not to have been ill pleased that the intrusion of these gentlemen gave him an opportunity of showing, that if he had dispersed the revolutionary mob of the Fauxbourgs, it was without any undue degree of affection to the royal cause. He felt, or affected, extreme jealousy of the armed aristocrats whom he found in the Tuilleries, and treated them as men who had indecently thrust themselves into the palace, to usurp the duty of defending the King's person, by law consigned to the National Guard. To appease the jealousy of the civic soldiers, the King issued his commands upon the Royalists to lay down their arms. He was no sooner obeyed by those, to whom alone out of so many millions he could still

* February 23th, 1791.

issue his commands, than a most scandalous scene ensued. The soldiers, falling upon the unfortunate gentlemen, expelled them from the palace with blows and insult, applying to them the name of Knights of the Poniard, afterwards often repeated in revolutionary objurcation. The vexation and sorrow of the captive prince had a severe effect on his health, and was followed by indisposition.

The second incident we have alluded to intimated even more directly the personal restraint in which he was now held. Early in spring* Louis had expressed his purpose of going to Saint Cloud, under the pretext of seeking a change of air, but in reality, it may be supposed, for the purpose of ascertaining what degree of liberty he would be permitted to exercise. The royal carriages were drawn out, and the King and Queen had already mounted theirs, when the cries of the spectators, echoed by those of the National Guards who were upon duty, declared that the King should not be permitted to leave the Tuilleries. La Fayette arrived—commanded, implored, threatened the refractory guards, but was answered by their unanimous refusal to obey his orders. After the scene of tumult had lasted more than an hour, and it had been clearly proved that La Fayette's authority was unable to accomplish his purpose, the royal persons returned to the palace, now their absolute and avowed prison.

La Fayette was so much moved by this affront, that he laid down his commission as commandant of the National Guard, and although he resumed it, upon the general remonstrances and excuses of the corps, it was not without severely reproaching them for their want of discipline, and intimating justly, that the respect they showed ought to be for his rank and office, not for his person.

Meantime, the natural inferences from these cruel lessons, drove the King and Queen nearly desperate. The events of the 28th of February had shown that they were not to be permitted to introduce their friends or defenders within the fatal walls which enclosed them; those of the 18th April proved, that they were not allowed to leave their precincts. To fly from Paris, to gather around him such faithful subjects as might remain, seemed, though a desperate resource, the only one which remained to the unhappy monarch, and the preparations were already made for the fatal experiment.

The Marquis de Bouillé had, under various pretences, formed a camp at Montmedy, and had drawn thither some of the troops he could best depend upon; but such was the universal indisposition, both of the soldiery and the people of every description, that the general seems to have entertained almost no hope of any favourable result for the royal cause. The King's life might have been saved by his escaping into foreign parts, but there was hardly any prospect of restoring the monarchy.

The history of the unhappy journey to Varennes is well known. On the night between the 19th and 20th of August, Louis and his Queen, with their two children, attended by one lady, and escorted by three gentlemen of the *Gardes de Corps*, set out in disguise from Paris. The King left behind him a long manifesto, inculcating the Assembly for various political errors, and solemnly protesting against the acts of government to which he had been compelled, as he stated, to give his assent, during what he termed his captivity, which he seemed to have dated from his compulsory residence in the Tuilleries.

The very first person whom the Queen encountered in the streets was La Fayette himself, as he crossed the Place du Carouzel. A hundred other dangers attended the route of the unfortunate fugitives, and the hair-breadth escapes by which they profited, seemed to intimate the favour of fortune, while they only proved her mutability. An escort, placed for them at the Pont de Sommeville, had been withdrawn, after their remaining at that place for a time had excited popular suspicion. At Saint Menehould they met a small detachment of dragoons, stationed there by Bouillé also for their escort. But while they

* 18th April, 1791.

halted to change horses, the King, whose features were remarkable, was recognized by Drouet, a son of the postmaster. The young man was a keen Revolutionist, and resolving to prevent the escape of the sovereign, he mounted a horse, and pushed forwards to Varennes to prepare the municipality for the arrival of the King.

Two remarkable chances seemed to show that the good angel of Louis still strove in his favour. Drouet was pursued by a resolute royalist, a quarter-master of dragoons, who suspected his purpose, and followed him with the design of preventing it at all hazards. But Drouet, better acquainted with the road, escaped a pursuit which might have been fatal to him. The other incident was, that Drouet for a time pursued the road to Verdun, instead of that to Varennes, concluding the King had taken the former direction, and was only undeceived by an accident.

He reached Varennes, and found a ready disposition to stop the flight of the unhappy prince. The King was stopped at Varennes and arrested; the National Guards were called out—the dragoons refused to fight in the King's defence—an escort of hussars, who might have cut a passage, arrived too late, acted with reluctance, and finally deserted the town. Still there remained one last throw for their freedom. If the time could have been protracted but for an hour and a half, Bouillé would have been before Varennes at the head of such a body of faithful and disciplined troops as might easily have dispersed the national militia. He had even opened a correspondence with the royal prisoners through a faithful emissary who ventured into Varennes, and obtained speech of the King; but could obtain no answer more decided than that, being a prisoner, Louis declined giving any orders. Finally, almost all the troops of the Marquis de Bouillé declared against the King and in favour of the nation, tending to show the little chance which existed of a favourable issue to the King's attempt to create a royalist force. The Marquis himself made his escape with difficulty into the Austrian territories.

The Parisians in general, but especially the Legislative Assembly, had been at first astounded, as if by an earthquake. The King's escape seemed to menace his instant return at the head of aristocratical levies, supported by foreign troops. Reflection made most men see as a more probable termination, that the dynasty of the Bourbons could no longer hold the crown; and that the government, already so democratical in principle, must become a republic in all its forms.* The Constitutionals grieved that their constitution required a monarchical head; the Republicans rejoiced, for it had long been their object to abolish the kingly office. Nor did the anarchists of the Jacobin Club less exult; for the events which had taken place, and their probable consequences, were such as to animate the revolutionary spirit, exasperate the public mind, prevent the return of order, and stimulate the evil passions of lawless ambition, and love of blood and rapine.

* The following anecdote will serve to show by what means this conclusion was insinuated into the public mind. A group in the Palais Royal were discussing in great alarm the consequences of the King's flight, when a man dressed in a thread-bare great-coat leaped upon a chair and addressed them thus:—"Citizens, listen to a tale, which shall not be a long one. A certain well-meaning Neapolitan was once on a time startled in his evening walk, by the astounding intelligence that the Pope was dead. He had not recovered his astonishment, when behold he is informed of a new disaster,—the King of Naples was also no more. 'Surely,' said the worthy Neapolitan, 'the sun must vanish from Heaven at such a combination of fatalities.' But they did not cease here. The Archbishop of Palermo, he is informed, has also died suddenly. Overcome by this last shock he retired to bed, but not to sleep. In the morning he was disturbed in his melancholy reverie by a rumbling noise, which he recognized at once to be the motion of the wooden instrument which makes macaroni. 'Aha!' says the good man, starting up, 'Can I trust my ears?—The Pope is dead—the King of Naples is dead—the Bishop of Palermo is dead—yet my neighbour the baker makes macaroni! Come! The lives of these great folks are not then so indispensable to the world after all.'" The man in the great-coat jumped down and disappeared. "I have caught his meaning," said a woman amongst the listeners. "He has told us a tale, and it begins like all tales—*There was once a King and a Queen.*"

But La Fayette was determined not to relinquish the constitution he had formed, and, in spite of the unpopularity of the royal dignity, rendered more so by this frustrated attempt to escape, he was resolved to uphold it; and was joined in this purpose by Barnave and others, who did not always share his sentiments, but who thought it shame, apparently, to show to the world, that a constitution, framed for immortality upon the best political principles of the most accomplished statesmen in France, was so slightly built, as to part and go asunder at the first shock. The purpose of the commandant of Paris, however, was not to be accomplished without a victory over the united strength of the Republican and Jacobinical parties, who on their part might be expected to put in motion on the occasion their many-handed revolutionary engine, an insurrection of the people.

Such was the state of political opinions, when the unfortunate Louis was brought back to Paris. He was, with his wife and children, covered with dust, dejected with sorrow, and exhausted with fatigue. The faithful *Gardes de Corps* who had accompanied their flight, sat bound like felons on the driving seat of the carriage. His progress was at first silent and unhonoured. The guard did not present arms—the people remained covered—no man said God bless him. At another part of the route, a number of the rabble precipitated themselves on the carriage, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the National Guards, and some deputies, could assure it a safe passage. Under such auspices were the royal family committed once more to their old prison of the Tuilleries.

Meantime the crisis of the King's fate seemed to be approaching. It was not long ere the political parties had an opportunity of trying their respective force. A meeting was held upon the motion of the Republican and Jacobinical leaders, in the Champ de Mars,* to subscribe a petition for the dethronement of the King, couched in the boldest and broadest terms. There was in this plain a wooden edifice raised on scaffolding, called the Altar of the Country, which had been erected for the ceremony of the Federation of 14th July, 1790, when the assembled representatives of the various departments of France took their oath to observe the constitution. On this altar the petition was displayed for signature; but each revolutionary act required a preliminary libation of blood, and the victims on this occasion were two wretched invalids, whom the rabble found at breakfast under the scaffolding which supported the revolutionary altar, and accused of a design to blow up the patriots. To accuse was to condemn. They were murdered without mercy, and their heads, paraded on pikes, became as usual the standards of the insurgent citizens. The municipal officers attempted to disperse the assemblage, but to no purpose. Bailli, mayor of Paris, together with La Fayette, resolved to repel force by force; martial law was proclaimed, and its signal, the red flag, was displayed from the Hotel de Ville. La Fayette, with a body of grenadiers, arrived in the Champ de Mars. He was received with abuse, and execrations of "Down with La Fayette! Down with martial law!" followed by a volley of stones. The commandant gave orders to fire, and was on this occasion most promptly obeyed; for the grenadiers pouring their shot directly into the crowd, more than a hundred men lay dead at the first volley. The Champ de Mars was empty in an instant, and the Constituted Authority, for the first time since the Revolution commenced, remained master of a contested field. La Fayette ought to have followed up this triumph of the legal force, by giving a triumph to the law itself, in the trial and conviction of some of his prisoners, selecting particularly the agitators employed by the Club of Jacobins; but he thought he had done enough in frightening these harpies back to their dens. Some of their leaders sought and found refuge among the Republicans, which was not in that hour of danger very willingly granted.† Marat and many others who had been

* July 17, 1791.

† Memoires de Madame Roland—article Robert.

hitherto the undaunted and unwearied instigators of the rabble, were compelled to skulk in obscurity for some time after this victory of the Champ de Mars, which the Jacobins felt severely at the time, and forgot not afterwards to avenge most cruelly.

This victory led to the triumph of the Constitutionalists in the Assembly. The united exertions of those who argued against the deposition of Louis, founding their reasoning upon that constitutional law, which declares the King inviolable in his person, overpowered the party who loudly called on the Assembly to proclaim his forfeiture, or appoint his trial. The Assembly clogged, however, the future inviolability of the King with new penalties. If the King, having accepted the constitution, should retract, they decreed he should be considered as abdicated. If he should order his army, or any part of it, to act against the nation, this should in like manner be deemed an act of abdication; and an abdicated monarch, it was farther decreed, should become an ordinary citizen, answerable to the laws for every act he had done before or since the act of abdication.

The constitution, with the royal immunity thus curtailed and maimed, was now again presented to the King, who again accepted it purely and simply, in terms which, while they excited acclamation from the Assembly, were but feebly echoed from the gallery.* The legislators were glad to make a virtue of necessity, and complete their constitutional code, though in a precarious manner; but the hearts of the people were now decidedly alienated from the King, and, by a strange concurrence of misfortune, mixed with some errors, Louis, whose genuine and disinterested good intentions ought to have made him the darling of his subjects, had now become the object of their jealousy and detestation.

Upon reviewing the measures which had been adopted on the King's return to Paris, historians will probably be of opinion, that it was impolitic in the Assembly to offer the constitutional crown to Louis, and imprudent in that unhappy prince to accept it under the conditions annexed. On the former point it must be remembered, that these innovators, who had changed everything else in the state, could, upon principle, have had no hesitation to alter the person or the dynasty of their sovereign. According to the sentiments which they had avowed, the King, as well as the Nobles and Clergy, was in their hands, as clay in that of the potter, to be used or thrown away at pleasure. The present King, in the manifesto left behind him on his flight, had protested to all Europe against the system of which he was made the head, and it was scarce possible that his sentiments could be altered in its favour, by the circumstances attending his unwilling return from Varennes. The Assembly, therefore, acting upon their own principles, should have at once proceeded on the idea that his flight was a virtual abdication of the crown—they should have made honourable provision for a prince placed in so uncommon a situation, and suffered him to enjoy in Spain or Italy an honourable independence, so soon as the storm was ended which threatened them from abroad. In the meanwhile, the person of the King would have been a pledge in their hands, which might have given them some advantage in treating with the foreign princes of his family, and the potentates of Europe in general. The general policy of this appears so obvious, that it was probably rather the difficulty of arranging in what hands the executive authority should be lodged, than any preference of Louis XVI., which induced the Assembly again to deposit it in his hands, shorn in a great measure even of the limited consequence and privileges constitutionally annexed to it. La Fayette and his party perhaps reckoned on the King's spirit having given way, from observing how unanimously the people of France were disposed in favour of the new state of things, and may have trusted to his accommodating himself, therefore, without further resistance, to act the part of the unsubstantial pageant which the constitution assigned him.

* September 13, 1791.

If it was impolitic in the Constitutionals to replace the crown upon the head of Louis, it was certainly unworthy of that monarch to accept it, unless invested with such a degree of power as might give him some actual weight and preponderance in the system. Till his flight to Varennes, the King's dislike to the constitution was a secret in his own bosom, which might indeed be suspected from circumstances, but which could not be proved; and which, placed as he was, the King was entitled to conceal, since his real sentiments could not be avowed consistently with his personal safety. But now this veil was torn aside, and he had told all Europe in a public declaration, that he had been acting under constraint since the time he was brought in triumph from Versailles to Paris. It would certainly have been most dignified in Louis to have stood or fallen in conformity with this declaration, made on the only occasion which he had enjoyed for such a length of time, of speaking his own free sentiments. He should not, when brought back to his prison, have resumed the submission of a prisoner, or affected to accept as a desirable boon, the restoration, as it might be called, and that in a mutilated state, of a sovereignty, which he had voluntarily abandoned at such extreme personal risk. His resolutions were too flexible, and too much at the mercy of circumstances, to be royal or noble. Charles I., even in the Isle of Wight, treated with his subjects, as a prisoner indeed, but still as a King, refusing to accede to such articles as in his own mind he was determined not to abide by. Louis, we conceive, should have returned the same answer to the Assembly which he did to the royalist officer at Varennes, "that a prisoner could give no orders, and make no concessions." He should not, like a bird which has escaped and been retaken, forget the notes which he uttered when at freedom, and return to his set and prescribed prison-song the instant that the cage again inclosed him. No man, above all no king, should place the language of his feelings and sentiments so much at the disposal of fortune. An adherence to the sentiments expressed in his voluntary declaration, might, it is possible, have afforded him the means of making some more favourable composition; whereas the affectation of willing submission to the same force which his own voice had so lately proclaimed illegal, could but make the unhappy King suspected of attempting a deceit, by which no one could be deceived. But the difficulties of his situation were great, and Louis might well remember the proverb, which places the grave of deposed sovereigns close to their prison-gates. He might be persuaded to temporize with the party which still offered to preserve a show of royalty in the constitution, until time or circumstances permitted him to enlarge its basis. In the meantime, if we can believe Bertrand de Moleville, Louis avowed to him the determination to act under the constitution with all sincerity and good faith; but it must be owned, that it would have required the virtues of a saint to have enabled him to make good this pledge, had the success of the Austrians, or any strong counter-revolutionary movement, tempted him to renounce it. At all events, the King was placed in a doubtful and suspicious position towards the people of France, who must necessarily have viewed with additional jealousy the head of a government, who, avowedly discontented with the share of power allotted to him, had nevertheless accepted it,—like the impoverished gamester, who will rather play for small stakes than be cut out of the game.

The work of the Constitution being thus accomplished, the National, or, as it is usually called, the Constituent Assembly, dissolved itself, agreeably to the vow they had pronounced in the Tennis-court at Versailles. The Constitution, that structure which they raised for immortality, soon afterwards became ruinous; but in few assemblies of statesmen have greater and more varied talents been assembled. Their debates were often fierce and stormy, their mode of arguing wild and vehement, their resolutions sudden and ill-conceived. These were the faults partly of the French character, which is peculiarly open to sudden impulses, partly, to the great changes perpetually crowding upon them,

and to the exciting progress of a revolution which hurried all men into extravagance. On the other hand, they respected freedom of debate; and the proscription of members of their body, for maintaining and declaring their sentiments, in opposition to that of the majority, is not to be found in their records, though so fearfully frequent in those of their successors. Their main and master error was the attempt to do too much, and to do it all at once. The parties kept no terms with each other, would wait for no conviction, and make no concession. It was a war for life and death betwixt men, who, had they seen more calmly for their country and for themselves, would rather have sacrificed some part of the theoretical exactness of principle on which they insisted, to the opportunity of averting practical evil, or attaining practical good. The errors of the Assembly were accordingly those of extremes. They had felt the weight of the feudal chains, and they destroyed the whole nobility. The monarch had been too powerful for the liberties of the subject—they now bound him as a slave at the feet of the legislative authority. Their arch of liberty gave way, because they hesitated to place upon it, in the shape of an efficient executive government, a weight sufficient to keep it steady. Yet to these men France was indebted for the first principles of civil liberty. They kindled the flame, though they could not regulate it; and such as now enjoy its temperate warmth should have sympathy for the errors of those to whom they owe a boon so inestimable;—nor should this sympathy be the less, that so many perished in the conflagration, which, at the commencement, they had fanned too rashly. They did even more, for they endeavoured to heal the wounds of the nation by passing an act of general amnesty, which at once placed in security the Jacobins of the Champ de Mars, and the unfortunate companions of the King's flight. This was one of their last and wisest decrees, could they have enforced its observance by their successors.

The adieus which they took of power was anything but prophetic. They pronounced the Revolution ended, and the Constitution completed—the one was but commencing, and the other was baseless as a morning dream.

CHAPTER VII.

Legislative Assembly—Its Composition.—Constitutionalists—Girondists or Brissotins—Jacobins.—Views and Sentiments of Foreign Nations—England—Views of the Tories and Whigs—Anacharsis Klotz—Austria—Prussia—Russia—Sweden.—Emigration of the French Princes and Clergy—Increasing Unpopularity of Louis from this cause.—Death of the Emperor Leopold, and its Effects.—France declares War.—Views and Interests of the different Parties in France at this Period.—Decree against Monsieur—Louis interposes his Veto.—Decree against the Priests who should refuse the Constitutional Oath—Louis again interposes his Veto—Consequences of these Refusals.—Fall of De Lessart.—Ministers now chosen from the Brissotins.—All Parties favourable to War.

THE First, or Constituent Assembly, in destroying almost all which existed as law in France, when they were summoned together as States-general, had preserved, at least in form, the name and power of a monarch. The Legislative Assembly, which succeeded them, seemed preparing to destroy the symbol of royalty which their predecessors had left standing, though surrounded by republican enactments.

The composition of this Second Body of Representatives was much more unfavourable to the royal cause than that of those whom they succeeded. In a bad hour for France and themselves, the Constituent Assembly had adopted

two regulations, which had the same disabling effect on their own political interest, as the celebrated self-denying ordinance in the Long Parliament had upon that of the Presbyterians. By the first of these decrees, the members of the Constituent Assembly were rendered incapable of being elected to that which should succeed its dissolution. By the second, they were declared ineligible to be ministers of the crown, until two years had elapsed after their sitting as legislators. Those individuals who had already acquired some political knowledge and information, were thus virtually excluded from the counsels of the state, and pronounced inadmissible into the service of the crown. This exclusion was adopted upon the wild principle of levelling, which was one prime moving spring of the Revolution, and which affected to destroy even the natural aristocracy of talents. "Who are the *distinguished members* whom the speaker mentions?" said a Jacobin orator, in the true spirit of this imaginary equality;—"There are no members of the Assembly more distinguished than others by talents or skill, any more than by birth or rank—We are all *EQUAL*." Rare words indeed, and flattering, doubtless, to many in the Assembly. Unhappily, no legislative decree can give sense to folly, or experience to ignorance; it could only prevent a certain portion of wisdom and talent from being called into the service of the country. Both King and people were necessarily obliged to put their confidence in men of inexperience in business, liable to act with all the rashness by which inexperience is generally attended. As the Constituent Assembly contained the first and readiest choice among the men of ability whom France had in her bosom, it followed that the second Assembly could not be equal to the first in abundance of talent; but still the Legislative Assembly held in its ranks many men of no ordinary acquirements, and a few of a corresponding boldness and determination of character. A slight review of the parties into which it was divided, will show how much the influence of the Crown was lowered in the scale.

There was no party remained which could be termed strictly or properly Royalist. Those who were attached to the old monarchy of France were now almost all exiles, and there were left but few even of that second class of more moderate and more reasonable Royalists, who desired to establish a free constitution on the basis of an effective monarchy, strong enough to protect the laws against licence, but not sufficiently predominant to alter or overthrow them. Cazalés, whose chivalrous defence of the nobility,—Maury, whose eloquent pleadings for the church,—had so often made an honourable but vain struggle against the advances of revolution, were now silent and absent, and the few feeble remnants of their party had ranged themselves with the Constitutionalists, who were so far favourers of monarchy as it made part of their favourite system—and no farther. La Fayette continued to be the organ of that party, and had assembled under his banners Duport, Barnave, Lameth, all of whom had striven to keep pace with the headlong spirit of the Revolution, but, being outstripped by more active and forward champions of the popular cause, now shifted ground, and formed a union with those who were disposed to maintain, that the present Constitution was adapted to all the purposes of free and effectual government, and that, by its creation, all farther revolutionary measures were virtually superseded.

In stern opposition to those admirers of the Constitution, stood two bodies of unequal numbers, strength, and efficacy; of which the first was determined that the Revolution should never stop until the downfall of the monarchy, while the second entertained the equally resolved purpose of urging these changes still farther onwards, to the total destruction of all civil order, and the establishment of a government in which terror and violence should be the ruling principles, to be wielded by the hands of the demagogues who dared to nourish a scheme so nefarious. We have indicated the existence of both these parties in the first, or Constituent Assembly; but in the second, called the Legislative, they

assumed a more decided form, and appeared united towards the abolition of royalty as a common end, though certain, when it was attained, to dispute with each other the use which was to be made of the victory. In the words of Shakspeare, they were determined

"To lay this Angiers even with the ground,
Then, after, fight who should be king of it."

The first of these parties took its most common denomination from the Gironde, a department which sent most of its members to the Convention. Condorcet, dear to science, was one of this party, and it was often named from Brissot, another of its principal leaders. Its most distinguished champions were men bred as lawyers in the south of France, who had, by mutual flattery, and the habit of living much together, acquired no small portion of that self-conceit and overweening opinion of each other's talents, which may be frequently found among small provincial associations for political or literary purposes. Many had eloquence, and most of them a high fund of enthusiasm, which a classical education, and their intimate communication with each other, where each idea was caught up, lauded, re-echoed, and enhanced, had exalted into a spirit of republican zeal. They doubtless had personal ambition, but in general it seems not to have been of a low or selfish character. Their aims were often honourable though visionary, and they marched with great courage towards their proposed goal, with the vain purpose of erecting a pure republic, in a state so disturbed as that of France, and by hands so polluted as those of their Jacobin associates. It will be recorded, however, to the disgrace of their pretensions to stern republican virtue, that the Girondists were willing to employ, for the accomplishment of their purpose, those base and guilty tools which afterwards effected their own destruction. They were for using the revolutionary means of insurrection and violence, until the republic should be established, and no longer; or, in the words of the satirist,

"For letting Rapine loose, and Murther,
To rage just so far, but no further;
And setting all the land on fire
To burn to a scantling, but no higher."

The Jacobins,—the second of these parties,—were allies of the Brissotins, with the ulterior purpose of urging the revolutionary force to the uttermost, but using as yet the shelter of their republican mantle. Robespierre, who, by an affectation of a frugal and sequestered course of life, preserved among the multitude the title of the Incorruptible, might be considered as the head of the Jacobins, if they had indeed a leader more than wolves have, which tune their united voices to the cry of him who bays the loudest. Danton, inexorable as Robespierre himself, but less prudent, because he loved gold and pleasure as well as blood and power, was next in authority. Marat, who loved to talk of murder as soldiers do of battles; the wretched Collot d'Herbois, a broken-down play-actor; Chabot, an ex-capuchin; with many other men of desperate character, whose moderate talents were eked out by the most profligate effrontery, formed the advanced guard of this party, soiled with every species of crime, and accustomed to act their parts in the management of those dreadful insurrections, which had at once promoted and dishonoured the Revolution. It is needless to preserve from oblivion names such as Santerre and Hebert, distinguished for cruelty and villainy above the other subaltern villains. Such was the party who, at the side of the Brissotins, stood prompt to storm the last bulwarks of the Monarchy, reserving to themselves the secret determination, that the spoil should be all their own.

The force of these three parties was as variously composed as their principles. That of La Fayette, as we have repeatedly observed, lay amongst the better order of shopkeepers and citizens, and other proprietors, who had

assumed arms for their own protection, and to maintain something like general good order. These composed the steadiest part of the National Guard, and, generally speaking, were at the devotion of their commandant, though his authority was resisted by them on some occasions, and seemed daily to grow more precarious. The Royalists might perhaps have added some force to the Constitutional party, but La Fayette did not now possess such an unsuspected character with the so called friends of freedom, as could permit him to use the obnoxious assistance of those who were termed its enemies. His high character as a military man still sustained an importance, which, nevertheless, was already somewhat on the wane.

The party of the Gironde had in their favour the theoretical amateurs of liberty and equality, young men, whose heated imaginations saw the Forum of ancient Rome in the gardens of the Palais Royal, and yielded a ready assent to whatsoever doctrine came recommended by a flourishing and eloquent peroration, and was rounded off in a sounding sentence, or a quaint apothegm. The partisans of Brissot had some interest in the southern departments, who had sent them to the capital, and conceived that they had a great deal more. They pretended that there existed in those districts a purer flame of freedom than in the metropolis itself, and held out, that Liberty, if expelled from Paris, would yet find refuge in a new republic, to be founded on the other side of the Loire. Such day-dreams did not escape the Jacobins, who carefully treasured them to be the apology of future violence, and finally twisted them into an accusation which bestowed on the Brissotins the odious name of Federalists, and charged them with an intention to dismember France, by splitting it into a league of petty commonwealths, like those of Holland and Switzerland.

The Brissotins had a point of union in the saloon of Madame Roland, wife to one of their number. The beauty, talents, courage, and accomplishments of this remarkable woman, pushed forward into public notice a husband of very middling abilities, and preserved a high influence over the association of philosophical rhapsodists, who hoped to oppose pikes with syllogisms, and to govern a powerful country by the discipline of an academy.

The substantial and dreadful support of the Jacobins lay in the Club so named, with the yet more violent association of Cordeliers and their original affiliated societies, which reigned paramount over those of the municipal bodies, which in most departments were fain to crouch under their stern and sanguinary dominion. This Club had more than once changed masters, for its principal and leading feature being the highest point of democratical ardour, it drove from its bosom in succession those who fell short of the utmost pitch of extravagant zeal for liberty and equality, manifested by the most uncompromising violence. The word *moderation* was as odious in this society as could have been that of slavery, and he who could affect the most exaggerated and outrageous strain of patriotism, was sure to outstrip their former leaders. Thus the Lameths took the guidance of the Club out of the hands of La Fayette; Robespierre, and Marat, wrenched the management from the Lameths; and, considering their pitch of extravagant ferocity, there was little chance of *their* losing it, unless an Avatar of the Evil Spirit had brought Satan himself to dispute the point in person.

The leaders, who were masters of this Club, had possession, as we have often remarked, of the master-keys to the passions of the populace, could raise a forest of pikes with one word, and unsheathe a thousand daggers with another. They directly and openly recommended the bloodiest and most ruffian-like actions, instead of those which, belonging to open and manly warfare, present something that is generous even in the midst of violence. "Give me," said the atrocious Marat, when instructing Barbaroux in his bloody science,— "Give me two hundred Neapolitans—the knife in their right hand, in their left a *surff*, to serve for a target—with these I will traverse France, and complete

the revolution." At the same lecture he made an exact calculation, (for the monster was possessed of some science,) showing in what manner two hundred and sixty thousand men might be put to death in one day. Such were the means, the men, and the plans of the Jacobins, which they were now, in the Legislative Assembly, to oppose to the lukewarm loyalty of the Constitutionists, and, in the hour of need, to the fine-spun republican theories of the Brissotins. But ere we proceed in our review of the internal affairs of the nation, it becomes now necessary to glance at her external relations.

Hitherto France had acted alone in this dreadful tragedy, while the other nations of Europe looked on in amazement, which now began to give place to a desire of action. No part of public law is more subtle in argument than that which pretends to define the exact circumstances in which, according to the proper interpretation of the *Jus Gentium*, one nation is at liberty, or called upon, to interfere in the internal concerns of another. If my next neighbour's house is on fire, I am not only entitled, but obliged, by the rules alike of prudence and humanity, to lend my aid to extinguish it; or if a cry of murder arises in his household, the support due to the law, and the protection of the innocent, will excuse my forcible entrance upon his premises. These are extreme cases and easily decided; they have their parallels in the laws of nations, but they are of rare occurrence. But there lies between them and the general maxim, prohibiting the uncalled-for interference of one party in what primarily and principally concerns another, a whole *terra incognita* of special cases, in which it may be difficult to pronounce any satisfactory decision.

In the history of nations, however, little practical difficulty has been felt, for wherever the jurisconsults have found a Gordian knot, the sword of the sovereign has severed it without ceremony. The doubt has usually been decided on the practical questions, What benefit the neutral power is like to derive from his interference? And whether he possesses the power of using it effectually, and to his own advantage? In free countries, indeed, the public opinion must be listened to; but man is the same in every situation, and the same desire of aggrandizement, which induces an arbitrary monarch to shut his ears to the voice of justice, is equally powerful with senates and popular assemblies; and aggressions have been as frequently made by republics and limited monarchs on the independence of their neighbours, as by those princes who have no bounds to their own royal pleasure. The gross and barefaced injustice of the partition of Poland, had gone far to extinguish any remains of hesitation upon such subjects, and might be said to be a direct recognition of the right of the strongest. There would not, therefore, have wanted pretexts for interference in the affairs of France, of the nations around her, had any of them been at the time capable of benefiting by the supposed opportunity.

England, the rival of France, might, from the example of that country, have exercised a right of interfering with her domestic concerns, in requital of the aid which she afforded to the Americans; but besides that the publicity of the parliamentary debates must compel the most ambitious British minister to maintain at least an appearance of respect to the rights of other countries, England was herself much divided upon the subject of the French Revolution.

This was not the case when the eventful scene first commenced. We believe that the first display of light, reason, and rational liberty in France, was hailed as a day-spring through all Britain, and that there were few if any in that country, who did not feel their hearts animated and enlarged by seeing such a great and noble nation throwing aside the fetters, which at once restrained and dishonoured them, and assuming the attitude, language, and spirit of a free people. All men's thoughts and eyes were bent on struggles, which seemed to promise the regeneration of a mighty country, and the British generally felt as if days of old hate and mutual rivalry would thereafter be forgotten, and that in future the similarity of liberal institutions, and the possession of a just portion

of rational liberty on either side, would throw kindness and cordiality into the intercourse between the two countries, since France would no longer have ground to condemn England as a country of seditious and sullen clowns, or Britain to despise France as a nation of willing slaves.

This universal sympathy was not removed by the forcible capture of the Bastille, and the violences of the people on that occasion. The name of that fortress was so unpopular, as to palliate and apologize for the excesses which took place on its fall, and it was not to be expected that a people so long oppressed, when exerting their power for the first time, should be limited by the strict bounds of moderation. But in England there always have been, and must exist, two parties of politicians, who will not long continue to regard events of such an interesting nature with similar sensations.

The revolutionists of France were naturally desirous to obtain the applause of the elder-born of freedom, and the societies in Britain, which assumed the character of the peculiar admirers and protectors of liberty, conceived themselves obliged to extend their countenance to the changes in the neighbouring nation. Hence there arose a great intercourse between the clubs and self-constituted bodies in Britain, which assumed the extension of popular freedom as the basis of their association, and the revolutionists in France, who were realizing the systems of philosophical theorists upon the same ground. Warm tributes of applause were transmitted from several of these associations; the ambassadors sent to convey them were received with great distinction by the National Assembly; and the urbane intercourse which took place on these occasions, led to exaggerated admiration of the French system on the part of those, who had thus unexpectedly become the medium of intercourse between a great nation and a few private societies. The latter were gradually induced to form unfavourable comparisons betwixt the Temple of French Freedom, built, as it seemed to them, upon the most perfect principles of symmetry and uniformity, and that in which the goddess had been long worshipped in England, and which, on the contrast, appeared to them like an ancient edifice constructed in barbaric times, and incongruously encumbered with Gothic ornaments and emblems, which modern political architects had discarded. But these political sages overlooked the important circumstance, that the buttresses, which seemed in some respects encumbrances to the English edifice, might, on examination, be found to add to its stability; and that in fact they furnished evidence to show, that the venerable pile was built with cement fitted to endure the test of ages, while that of France, constructed of lath daubed with untempered mortar, like the pageants she exhibited on the revolutionary festivals, was only calculated to be the wonder of a day.

The earnest admiration of either party of the state is sure in England to be balanced by the censure of the other, and leads to an immediate trial of strength betwixt them. The popular side is always the more loud, the more active, the more imposing of the two contending parties. It is formidable, from the body of talents which it exhibits, (for those ambitious of distinction are usually friends to innovation,) and from the unanimity and vigour with which it can wield them. There may be, and indeed always are, great differences in the point to which each leader is desirous to carry reformation; but they are unanimous in desiring its commencement. The Opposition, also, as it is usually termed, has always included several of the high aristocracy of the country, whose names ennoble their rank, and whose large fortunes are a pledge, that they will, for their own sakes, be a check upon eager and violent experimentalists. The Whigs, moreover, have the means of influencing assemblies of the lower orders, to whom the name of liberty is, and ought to be dear, since it is the privilege which must console them for narrow circumstances and inferiority of condition; and these means the party, so called, often use successfully, always with industry and assiduity.

The counterbalance to this active and powerful body is to be found, speaking generally, in the higher classes at large—the great mass of nobility and gentry—the clergy of the Established Church—the superior branches of the law—the wealthier of the commercial classes—and the bulk of those who have property to lose, and are afraid of endangering it. This body is like the *Ban* of the Germanic empire, a formidable force, but slow and diffident in its operations, and requiring the stimulus of sudden alarm to call it into effective exercise. To one or other of these great national parties, every Englishman, of education enough to form an opinion, professes to belong; with a perfect understanding on the part of all men of sense and probity, that the general purpose is to ballast the vessel of the state, not to upset it, and that it becomes a state-treason in any one to follow his party when they carry their doctrines to extremity.

From the nature of this grand national division it follows, that the side which is most popular should be prompt in adopting theories, and eager in recommending measures of alteration and improvement. It is by such measures that men of talents rise into importance, and by such that the popular part of the constitution is maintained in its integrity. The other party is no less useful, by opposing to each successive attempt at innovation the delays of form, the doubts of experience, the prejudices of rank and condition, legal objections, and the weight of ancient and established practice. Thus, measures of a doubtful tendency are severely scrutinized in Parliament, and if at length adopted, it is only when public opinion has long declared in their favour, and when, *men's* minds having become habituated to the discussion, their introduction into our system cannot produce the violent effect of absolute novelty. If there were no Whigs, our constitution would fall to pieces for want of repair; if there were no Tories, it would be broken in the course of a succession of rash and venturesome experiments.

It followed as a matter of course, that the Whigs of Britain looked with complacency, the Tories with jealousy, upon the progress of the new principles in France; but the latter had a powerful and unexpected auxiliary in the person of Edmund Burke, whose celebrated *Reflections on the French Revolution* had the most striking effect on the public mind, of any work in our time. There was something exaggerated at all times in the character as well as the eloquence of that great man; and upon reading at this distance of time his celebrated composition, it must be confessed that the colours he has used in painting the extravagancies of the Revolution, ought to have been softened, by considering the peculiar state of a country, which, long labouring under despotism, is suddenly restored to the possession of unembarrassed license. On the other hand, no political prophet ever viewed futurity with a surer ken. He knew how to detect the secret purpose of the various successive tribes of revolutionists, and saw in the constitution the future republic; in the republic the reign of anarchy; from anarchy he predicted military despotism, and from military despotism, last to be fulfilled, and hardest to be believed, he prophesied the late but secure resurrection of the legitimate monarchy. Above all, when the cupidity of the French rulers aspired no farther than the forcible possession of Avignon and the Venaissin territories, he foretold their purpose of extending the empire of France by means of her new political theories, and, under pretext of propagating the principles of freedom, her project of assailing with her arms the states, whose subjects had been already seduced by her doctrines.

The work of Burke raised a thousand enemies to the French Revolution, who had before looked upon it with favour, or at least with indifference. A very large portion of the talents and aristocracy of the opposition party followed Burke into the ranks of the ministry, who saw with pleasure a member, noted for his zeal in the cause of the Americans, become an avowed enemy of the French Revolution, and with equal satisfaction heard him use arguments, which might in their own mouths have assumed an obnoxious and suspicious character.

But the sweeping terms in which the author reprobated all attempts at state-reformation, in which he had himself been at one time so powerful an agent, subjected him to the charge of inconsistency among his late friends, many of whom, and Fox in particular, declared themselves favourable to the progress of the Revolution in France, though they did not pretend to excuse its excesses. Out of Parliament it met more unlimited applause; for England, as well as France, had talent impatient of obscurity; ardour which demanded employment, ambition, which sought distinction, and men of headlong passions, who expected in a new order of things more unlimited means of indulging them. The middling classes were open in England as elsewhere, though not perhaps so much so, to the tempting offer of increased power and importance; and the populace of London and other large towns loved license as well as the sans culottes of France. Hence the division of the country into Aristocrats and Democrats, the introduction of political hatred into the bosom of families, and the dissolution of many a band of friendship which had stood the strain of a life-time. One part of the kingdom looked upon the other with the stern and relentless glance of keepers who are restraining madmen, while the others bent on them the furious glare of madmen conspiring revenge on their keepers.

From this period the progress of the French Revolution seemed in England like a play presented upon the stage, where two contending factions divide the audience, and hiss or applaud as much from party spirit as from real critical judgment, while every instant increases the probability that they will try the question by actual force.

Still, though the nation was thus divided on account of French politics, England and France observed the usual rules of amity, and it seemed that the English were more likely to wage hostility with each other than to declare war against France.

There was, in other kingdoms and states upon the Continent, the same diversity of feelings respecting the Revolution which divided England. The favour of the lower and unprivileged classes, in Germany especially, was the more fixed upon the progress of the French Revolution, because they lingered under the same incapacities from which the changes in France had delivered the Commons, or Third Estate, of that country. Thus far their partiality was not only natural and innocent, but praiseworthy. It is as natural for a man to desire the natural liberty from which he is unjustly excluded, as it is for those who are in an apartment where the air is polluted, to wish for the wholesome atmosphere.

Unhappily, these justifiable desires were connected with others of a description less harmless and beneficial. The French Revolution had proclaimed war on castles, as well as peace to cottages. Its doctrine and practice held out the privileged classes in every country as the natural tyrants and oppressors of the poor, whom it encouraged by the thousand tongues of its declaimers to pull down their thrones, overthrow their altars, renounce the empire of God above, and of kings below, and arise, like regenerated France, alike from thralldom and from superstition. And such opinions, calling upon the other nations of Europe to follow them in their democratic career, were not only trumpeted forth in all affiliated clubs of the Jacobins, whose influence in the National Assembly was formidable, but were formally recognized by that body itself upon an occasion, which, but for the momentous omen it presented, might have been considered as the most ridiculous scene ever gravely acted before the legislators of a great nation.

There was in Paris a native of Prussia, an exile from his country, whose brain, none of the soundest by nature, seems to have been affected by the progress of the Revolution, as that of ordinary madmen is said to be influenced by the increase of the moon. This personage having become disgusted with his baptismal name, had adopted that of the Scythian philosopher, and uniting it with

his own Teutonic family appellation, entitled himself—"Anacharsis Klotz, Orator of the Human Race."

It could hardly be expected, that the assumption of such a title should remain undistinguished by some supreme act of folly. Accordingly, the self-dubbed Anacharsis set on foot a procession, which was intended to exhibit the representatives of delegates from all nations upon earth, to assist at the Feast of the Federation of the 14th July, 1790, by which the French nation proposed to celebrate the Revolution. In recruiting his troops, the Orator easily picked up a few vagabonds of different countries in Paris; but as Chaldeans, Illinois, and Siberians, are not so common, the delegates of those more distant tribes were chosen among the rabble of the city, and subsidized at the rate of about twelve francs each. We are sorry we cannot tell whether the personage, whose dignity was much insisted upon as "a Miltonic Englishman," was genuine, or of Parisian manufacture. If the last, he must have been worth seeing.

Anacharsis Klotz, having got his ragged regiment equipped in costume at the expense of the refuse of some theatrical wardrobe, conducted them in solemn procession to the bar of the National Assembly, presented them as the representatives of all the nations on earth, awakened to a sense of their debased situation by the choral voices of twenty-five millions of freemen, and demanding that the sovereignty of the people should be acknowledged, and their oppressors destroyed, through all the universe, as well as in France.

So far this absurd scene was the extravagance of a mere madman, and if the Assembly had sent Anacharsis to Bedlam, and his train to the Bicêtre, it would have ended as such a farce ought to have done. But *the President, in the name of the Assembly*, Monsieur de Menou, (the same, we believe, who afterwards turned Turk when in Egypt,) applauded the zeal of the Orator, and received the homage of his grotesque attendants as if they had been what they pretended, the deputies of the four quarters of the globe. To raise the jest to the highest, Alexander Lameth proposed,—as the feelings of these august pilgrims must necessarily be hurt to see, in the land of freedom, those kneeling figures representing conquered nations, which surround the statue of Louis XV.,—that, from respect to this body of charlatans, these figures should be forthwith demolished. This was done accordingly, and the destruction of these symbols was regarded as a testimony of the assistance which France was ready to render such states as should require her assistance, for following in the revolutionary course. The scene, laughable in itself, became serious when its import was considered, and went far to persuade the governments of the neighbouring countries, that the purpose of France was to revolutionize Europe, and spread the reign of liberty and equality over all the civilized nations of the globe. Hopes so flattering as these, which should assign to the commons not merely freedom from unjust restraints and disqualifications, (and that granted with reserve, and only in proportion as they became qualified to use it with advantage,) but their hour of command and sovereignty, with the privilege of retaliation on those who had so long kept them in bondage, were sure to find a general good reception among all to whom they were addressed, in whatsoever country; while, on the contrary, the fears of existing governments for the propagation of doctrines so seductive in themselves, and which France seemed apparently prepared to support with arms, were excited in an equal proportion.

It is true that the National Assembly had formerly declared that France renounced the unphilosophical practices of extending her limits by conquest, but although this disavowal spoke to the ear, it was contradicted by the annexation of those desirable possessions, the ancient city of Avignon, and the district called the Comtat Venaissin, to the kingdom of France; while the principle on which the annexation was determined on, seemed equally applicable in all similar cases.

A dispute had broken out betwixt the aristocrats and democrats in the town

and province in question; blood had flowed; a part of the population had demanded to become citizens of regenerated France. Would it be worthy of the Protectress of Liberty, said the advocates for the annexation, to repel from her bosom supplicants, who panted to share the freedom they had achieved? And so Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin were declared lawful prize, and *reunited* to France, (so went the phrase,) as Napoleon afterwards reunited the broken fragments of the empire of Charlemagne. The prescient eye of Burke easily detected, in these petty and surreptitious acquisitions, the gigantic plan by which France afterwards encircled herself by dependent states, which, while termed allies and auxiliaries, were in fact her most devoted subjects, and the governments of which changed their character from monarchical to popular, like the Great Nation.

The princes at the head of despotic governments were, of course, most interested in putting an end, if it were possible, to the present Revolution of France, and extinguishing a flame which appeared so threatening to its neighbours. Yet there was a long hesitation ere anything to this purpose was attempted. Austria, whom the matter concerned as so near an ally of France, was slow ere she made any decisive step towards hostility. The emperor Joseph was too much embroiled by the dissensions which he had provoked in the Netherlands, to involve himself in war with France. His successor, Leopold, had been always reckoned to belong to the philosophical party. He put down, without much trouble, the insurrection which had nearly cost his brother the dominion of Flanders, and as he used the victory with moderation, it seemed unlikely that the tranquillity of his government should be again disturbed. Still, it would have been hazardous to expose the allegiance of the subjects, so newly restored to order, to the temptations which must have opened to the Flemings by engaging in a war with France, and Leopold, far from seeking for a ground of quarrel with the favourers of the Revolution, entered into friendly relations with the government which they established; and, with anxiety, doubtless, for the safety of his brother-in-law, and an earnest desire to see the government of France placed on something like a steady footing, the Emperor continued in amicable terms with the existing rulers of that country down till his death. Francis, his successor, for some time seemed to adopt the same pacific policy.

Prussia, justly proud of her noble army, her veteran commanders, and the bequest of military fame left her by the Great Frederick, was more eager than Austria to adopt what began to be called the cause of Kings and Nobles, though the sovereign of the latter kingdom was so nearly connected with the unfortunate Louis. Frederick William had been taught to despise revolutionary movements by his cheap victory over the Dutch democracy, while the resistance of the Low Countries had induced the Austrians to dread such explosions.

Russia declared herself hostile to the French Revolution, but hazarded no effective step against them. The King of Sweden, animated by the adventurous character which made Gustavus, and after him Charles, sally forth from their frozen realms to influence the fates of Europe, showed the strongest disposition to play the same part, though the limited state of his resources rendered his valour almost nugatory.

Thus, while so many increasing discontents and suspicions showed that a decision by arms became every day more inevitable, Europe seemed still reluctant to commence the fatal encounter, as if the world had anticipated the long duration of the dreadful struggle, and the millions of lives which it must cost to bring it to a termination.

There can be no doubt that the emigration of the French princes, followed by a great part of the nobles of France, a step ill-judged in itself, as removing beyond the frontiers of the country all those most devotedly interested in the preservation of the monarchy, had the utmost effect in precipitating the im-

pending hostilities. The presence of so many noble exiles, the respect and sympathy which their misfortunes excited in those of the same rank, the exaggerated accounts which they gave of their own consequence, above all, the fear that the revolutionary spirit should extend beyond the limits of France, and work the same effects in other nations, produced through the whole aristocracy of Germany a general desire to restore them to their country and to their rights by the force of arms, and to extinguish by main force a spirit which seemed destined to wage war against all established governments, and to abolish the privileges which they recognized in their higher classes.

The state of the expatriated French clergy, driven from their home, and deprived of their means of subsistence, because they refused an oath imposed contrary to their ecclesiastical vows, and to their conscience, added religious zeal to the general interest excited by the spectacle, yet new to Europe, of thousands of nobility and clergy compelled to forsake their country, and take refuge among aliens.

Several petty princes of the empire made a show of levying forces, and complained of a breach of public faith, from the forfeiture of rights which individual princes of the Germanic body possessed in Alsace and Lorraine, and which, though sanctioned by the treaty of Westphalia, the National Assembly had not deemed worthy of exception from their sweeping abolition of feudal tenures. The emigrants formed themselves into armed corps at Treves and elsewhere, in which the noblest youths in France carried arms as privates, and which, if their number and resources had been in any proportion to their zeal and courage, were qualified to bear a distinguished part in deciding the destinies of the nation. Thus united, they gave way but too much to the natural feelings of their rank and country, menaced the land from which they had emigrated, and boasted aloud that it needed but one thrust (*botte*) of an Austrian General, to parry and pay home all the decrees of the National Assembly. This ill-timed anticipation of success was founded in a great measure on the disorganization of the French army, which had been begun by the decay of discipline during the progress of the Revolution, and was supposed to be rendered complete by the emigration of such numbers of officers as had joined the princes and their standards. It was yet to be learned how soon such situations can be filled up, from the zeal and talent always found among the lower classes, when critical circumstances offer a reward to ambition.

Yet while confident of success, the position of the emigrants was far from being flattering. Notwithstanding their most zealous exertions, the princes found their interest with foreign courts unable to bring either kings or ministers willingly or hastily to the point which they desired. The nearest approach was by the declaration of Pilnitz,* in which, with much diplomatical caution, the Emperor and King of Prussia announced the interest which they took in the actual condition of the King of France; and intimated, that, supposing the other nations appealed to should entertain feelings of the same kind, they would, conjoined with those other powers, use the most efficacious means to place Louis in a situation to establish in his dominions, on the basis of the most perfect liberty, a monarchical government, suitable to the rights of the sovereign, and the welfare of the people.

This implied threat, which was to be conditionally carried into effect in case other powers not named should entertain the same sentiments with the two sovereigns by whom it was issued, was well calculated to irritate, but far too vague to intimidate, such a nation as France. It showed the desire to wound, but showed it accompanied by the fear to strike, and instead of inspiring respect, only awakened indignation mingled with contempt.

The emigrants were generally represented among the people of France as

* 23d August, 1791.

men, who, to recover their own vain privileges, were willing to lead a host of foreigners into the bosom of their country; and lest some sympathy with their situation, as men suffering for the cause to which they had devoted themselves, and stimulated by anxiety for the fate of their imprisoned King, should have moderated the severity of this judgment, forgery was employed to render their communication with the foreign monarchs still more odious and unpopular.

The secret articles of a pretended treaty were referred to, by which it was alleged that Monsieur and the Comte d'Artois had agreed to a dismemberment of France; Lorraine and Alsace being to be restored to Austria, in consequence of her entering into the counter-revolutionary league. The date of this supposed treaty was first placed at Pavia, and afterwards transferred to Pilnitz; but although it was at one time assumed as a real document in the British House of Commons, it is now generally allowed to have had no existence.* In the meanwhile, as a calumny well adapted to the prejudices of the time, the belief in such a secret compact became generally current, and excited the utmost indignation against the selfish invaders, and against the exiles who were supposed willing to dismember their native country, rather than submit to a change in its constitution adverse to their own selfish interests.

A great deal of this new load of unpopularity was transferred to the account of the unfortunate Louis, who was supposed to instigate and support in private the attempts of his brothers for engaging foreign courts in his favour, while the Queen, from her relationship to the Emperor of Austria, was universally represented as a fury, urging him to revenge her loss of power on the rebellious people of France. An Austrian committee was talked of as managing the correspondence between these royal persons on the one part, and the foreign courts and emigrant princes on the other. This was totally groundless; but it is probable and natural that some intercourse was maintained between Louis and his brothers, as, though their warlike schemes suited the King's temper too little, he might wish to derive advantage from the dread which it was vainly supposed their preparations would inspire. The royal pair were indeed in a situation so disastrous, that they might have been excused for soliciting rescue by almost any means. But, in fact, Louis and Leopold seem to have agreed in the same system of temporizing politics. Their correspondence, as far as can be judged from the letters of De Lessart, Louis's trusted minister for foreign affairs, seems always to point to a middle course; that of suffering the Constitution of France to remain such as it had been chosen by the people, and sanctioned by the National Assembly, while the ministers attempted, by the influence of fear of dangers from abroad, to prevent any future assaults upon the power of the Crown, and especially against the King's person. On condition that such further aggression should be abstained from, the Emperor seems to have been willing to prohibit the mustering of the emigrant forces in his dominions. But Leopold demanded that, on their part, the French nation should release themselves from the clubs of Jacobins and Cordeliers. (another assembly of the same nature.) which, pretending to be no more than private associations, without public character or responsibility, nevertheless dictated to the National Assembly, the King, and all France, in virtue of the power of exciting the insurrectional movements, by which their denunciations and proposed revolutions had been as regularly seconded, as the flash is followed by the thunderbolt.

On the death of Leopold, and the succession of his brother Francis to the imperial throne, the disposition of Austria became much more turned towards war. It became the object of Francis to overcome the revolutionists, and prevent, if possible, the impending fate of the royal family. In adopting these warlike counsels, the mind of the new Emperor was much influenced by the

* See two articles on the pretended treaties of Pavia and Pilnitz, in the Anti-jacobin newspaper. They were, we believe, written by the late Mr. Pitt.

desire of Prussia to take the field. Indeed, the condition of the royal family, which became every day more precarious, seemed to both powers to indicate and authorize hostile measures, and they were at no pains to conceal their sentiments. It is not probable that peace would have remained long unbroken, unless some change of an unexpected and unhopcd-for character, in favour of royalty, had taken place in France; but after all the menaces which had been made by the foreign powers, it was France herself, who, to the surprise of Europe, first resorted to arms. The ostensible reason was, that, in declaring war, she only anticipated, as became a brave and generous nation, the commencement of hostilities which Austria had menaced. But each party in the state had its own private views for concurring in a measure, which, at the time, seemed of a very audacious character.

La Fayette now felt his influence in the National Guard of Paris was greatly on the wane. With the democrats he was regarded as a denounced and devoted man, for having employed the armed force to disperse the people in the Champ de Mars, upon the 17th of July, 1791. Those who countenanced him on that occasion were Parisian citizens of substance and property, but timorous, even from the very consciousness of their wealth, and unwilling, either for the sake of La Fayette, or the Constitution which he patronized, to expose themselves to be denounced by furious demagogues, or pillaged by the hordes of robbers and assassins whom they had at their disposal. This is the natural progress in revolutions. While order continues, property has always the superior influence over those who may be desirous of infringing the public peace; but when law and order are in a great measure destroyed, the wealthy are too much disposed to seek, in submission, or change of party, the means of securing themselves and their fortunes. The property which, in ordinary times, renders its owners bold, becomes, in those of imminent danger, the cause of their selfish cowardice. La Fayette tried, however, one decisive experiment, to ascertain what share remained of his once predominant influence over the Parisians. He stood an election for the mayoralty of Paris against Pethion, a person attached to the Brissotin, or Republican faction, and the latter was preferred. Unsuccessful in this attempt, La Fayette became desirous of foreign war. A soldier, and an approved one, he hoped his fortune would not desert him, and that at the head of armies which he trusted to render victorious over the public enemy, he might have a better chance of being listened to by those factions who began to hold in disrespect the red flag, and the decaying efforts of the National Guard of Paris; and thus gaining the power of once more enforcing submission to the Constitution, which he had so large a share in creating. Unquestionably also, La Fayette remembered the ardour of the French for national glory, and welcomed the thoughts of shifting the scene to combat against a public and avowed enemy, from his obscure and unsatisfactory struggle with the clubs of Paris. La Fayette, therefore, desired war, and was followed in his opinion by most of the Constitutional party.

The Girondists were not less eager for a declaration of hostilities. Either the King must, in that case, place his veto upon the measure, or he must denounce hostilities against his brother-in-law and his brothers, subjecting himself to all the suspicions of bad faith which such a measure inferred. If the arms of the nation were victorious, the risk of a revolution in favour of royalty by insurrections within, or invasions from without the kingdom, was ended at once and for ever. And if the foreigners obtained advantages, it would be easy to turn the unpopularity of the defeat upon the monarch, and upon the Constitutionals, who had insisted, and did still insist, on retaining him as the ostensible head of the executive government.

The Jacobins, those whose uniform object it was to keep the impulse of forcible and revolutionary measures in constant action, seemed to be divided among themselves on the great question of war or peace. Robespierre himself

struggled, in the Club, against the declaration of hostilities, probably because he wished the Brissotins to take all the responsibility of that hazardous measure, secure beforehand to share the advantage which it might afford those Republicans against the King and Constitutionals. He took care that Louis should profit nothing by the manner in which he pleaded the cause of justice and humanity. He affected to prophesy disasters to the ill-provided and ill-disciplined armies of France, and cast the blame beforehand on the known treachery of the King and the Royalists, the arbitrary designs of La Fayette and the Constitutionals, and the doubtful patriotism of Brissot and Condorcet. His arguments retarded, though they could not stop, the declaration of war, which probably they were not intended seriously to prevent; and the most violent and sanguinary of men obtained a temporary character for love of humanity, by adding hypocrisy to his other vices. The Jacobins in general, notwithstanding Robespierre's remonstrances, moved by the same motives which operated with the Brissotins, declared ultimately in favour of hostilities.

The resolution for war, therefore, predominated in the Assembly, and two preparatory measures served, as it were, to sound the intentions of the King on the subject, and to ascertain how far he was disposed to adhere to the Constitutional government which he had accepted, against those who, in his name, seemed prepared by force of arms to restore the old system of monarchy. Two decrees were passed against the emigrants in the Assembly.* The first was directed against the King's brother, and summoned Xavier Stanislaus, Prince of France, to return into France in two months, upon pain of forfeiting his right to the regency. The King consented to this decree—he could not, indeed, dissent from it with consistency, being, as he had consented to be, the holder of the crown under a constitution, against which his exiled brother had publicly declared war. The second decree denounced death against all emigrants who should be found assembled in arms on the 1st of January next. The right of a nation to punish with extreme pains those of its native subjects who bear arms against her, has never been disputed. But although on great changes of the state, the vanquished party, when essaying a second struggle, stand in the relation of rebels against the existing government, yet there is generally wisdom, as well as humanity, in delaying to assert this right in its rigour, until such a period shall have elapsed, as shall at once have established the new government in a confirmed state of possession, and given those attached to the old one time to forget their habits and predilections in its favour.

Under this defence, Louis ventured to use the sole constitutional weapon with which he was intrusted. He refused his consent to the decree. Sensible of the unpopularity attending this rejection, the King endeavoured to qualify it, by issuing a severe proclamation against the emigrants, countermanding their proceedings;—which was only considered as an act of dissimulation and hypocrisy.

The decree last proposed, jarred necessarily on the heart and sensibility of Louis—the next affected his religious scruples. The National Assembly had produced a schism in the church, by imposing on the clergy a constitutional oath, inconsistent with their religious vows. The philosophers in the present Legislative Body, with all the intolerance which they were in the habit of objecting against the Catholic Church, resolved to render the breach irreparable.

They had, they thought, the opportunity of striking a death's blow at the religion of the state, and they remembered that the watch-word applied by the Encyclopedists to Christianity, had been *Ecrasez l'infame*. The proposed decree bore, that such priests as refused the Constitutional oath should forfeit the pension allowed them for subsistence, when the state seized upon the estates of the clergy; that they should be put into a state of surveillance, in the seve-

* 8th November, 1791.

ral departments where they resided, and banished from France the instant they excited any religious dissensions.

A prince, with the genuine principles of philosophy, would have rejected **this** law as unjust and intolerant; but Louis had stronger motives to interpose **his** constitutional *Veto*, as a Catholic Christian whose conscience would not permit him to assent to the persecution of the faithful servants of his church. **He** refused his assent to this decree also.

In attempting to shelter the emigrants and the recusant churchmen, the **King** only rendered himself the more immediate object of the popular resentment. His compassion for the former was probably mingled with a secret wish, that the success of their arms might relieve him from his present restraint; at any rate, it was a motive easily imputed and difficult to be disproved. **He** was, therefore, represented to his people as in close union with the bands of exiled Frenchmen, who menaced the frontiers of the kingdom, and were about to accompany the foreign armies on their march to the metropolis. The royal rejection of the decree against the orthodox clergy was imputed to Louis's superstition, and his desire of rebuilding an ancient Gothic hierarchy unworthy of an enlightened age. In short, that was now made manifest, which few wise men had ever doubted, namely, that so soon as the **King** should avail himself of his constitutional right, in resistance to the popular will, he was sure to incur the risk of losing both his crown and life.

Meantime this danger was accelerated by the consequences of a dissension in the royal cabinet. It will scarce be believed, that situations in the ministry of France, so precarious in its tenure, so dangerous in its possession, so enfeebled in its authority, should have been even at this time the object of ambition; and that to possess such momentary and doubtful eminence, men, and wise men too, employed all the usual arts of intrigue and circumvention, by which rival statesmen, under settled governments and in peaceful times, endeavour to undermine and supplant each other. We have heard of criminals in the Scottish Highlands, who asserted with obstinacy the dignity of their clans, when the only test of pre-eminence was the priority of execution. We have read, too, of the fatal raft, where shipwrecked men in the midst of the Atlantic contended together with mortal strife for equally useless preferences. But neither case is equal in extravagance to the conduct of those rivals, who struggled for power in the cabinet of Louis XVI. in 1792, when, take what party they would, the jealousy of the Assembly, and the far more fatal proscription of the Jacobins, was sure to be the reward of their labours. So, however, it was, and the fact serves to show, that a day of power is more valuable in the eyes of ambition, than a life-time of ease and safety.

De Lessart, the Minister of Foreign Affairs already mentioned, had wished to avoid war, and had fed Leopold and his ministers with hopes, that the **King** would be able to establish a constitutional power superior to that of the dreadful Jacobins. The Comte de Narbonne, on the other side, being Minister of War, was desirous to forward the views of La Fayette, who, as we have said, longed to be at the head of the army. To obtain his rival's disgrace, Narbonne combined with La Fayette and other generals to make public the opposition which De Lessart and a majority of the cabinet ministers had opposed to the declaration of hostilities. Louis, justly incensed at an appeal to the public from the interior of his own cabinet, displaced Narbonne.

The Legislative Body immediately fell on De Lessart. He was called to stand on his defence, and imprudently laid before the Assembly his correspondence with Kaunitz, the Austrian minister. In their communications De Lessart and Kaunitz had spoken with respect of the Constitution, and with moderation even of their most obnoxious measures; but they had reprobated the violence of the Jacobins and Cordeliers, and stigmatized the usurpations of those clubs over the constitutional authorities of the state, whom they openly

insulted and controlled. These moderate sentiments formed the real source of De Lessart's fall. He was attacked on all sides—by the party of Narbonne and his friends from rivalry—by Brissot and his followers from policy, and in order to remove a minister too much of a royalist for their purpose—by the Jacobins, from hatred and revenge. Yet when Brissot condescended upon the following evidence of his guilt, argument and testimony against him must have indeed been scarce. De Lessart, with the view of representing the present affairs of France under the most softened point of view to the Emperor, had assured him that the Constitution of 1791 was firmly adhered to by a *majority* of the nation. “Hear the atrocious calumniator!” said the accuser. “The inference is plain. He dares to insinuate the existence of a minority, which is not attached to the Constitution.”* Another accusation, which in like manner was adopted as valid by the acclamation of the Assembly, was formed thus. A most horrible massacre had taken place during the tumults which attended the union of Avignon with the kingdom of France. Vergniaud, the friend and colleague of Brissot, alleged, that if the decree of union had been early enough sent to Avignon, the dissensions would not have taken place; and he charged upon the unhappy De Lessart, that he had not instantly transmitted the official intelligence. Now the decree of reunion was, as the orator knew, delayed on account of the King's scruples to accede to what seemed an invasion of the territory of the Church; and, at any rate, it could no more have prevented the massacre of Avignon, which was conducted by that same Jourdain, called *Coupe-tête*, the Bearded Man of the march to Versailles, than the subsequent massacre of Paris, perpetrated by similar agents. The orator well knew this; yet, with eloquence as false as his logic, he summoned the ghosts of the murdered from the *glacière*, in which their mangled remains had been piled, to bear witness against the minister, to whose culpable neglect they owed their untimely fate. All the while he was imploring for justice on the head of a man, who was undeniably ignorant and innocent of the crime, Vergniaud and his friends secretly meditated extending the mantle of safety over the actual perpetrators of the massacre, by a decree of amnesty; so that the whole charge against De Lessart can only be termed a mixture of hypocrisy and cruelty. In the course of the same discussion, Gauchon, an orator of the suburb of Saint Antoine, in which lay the strength of the Jacobin interest, had already pronounced sentence in the cause, at the very bar of the Assembly which was engaged in trying it. “Royalty may be struck out of the Constitution,” said the demagogue, “but the unity of the Legislative Body defies the touch of time. Courtiers, ministers, kings, and their civil lists, may pass away, but the sovereignty of the people, and the pikes which enforce it, are perpetual.”

This was touching the root of the matter. De Lessart was a royalist, though a timid and cautious one, and he was to be punished as an example to such ministers as should dare to attach themselves to their sovereign and his personal interest. A decree of accusation was passed against him, and he was sent to Orleans to be tried before the High Court there. Other Royalists of distinction were committed to the same prison, and, in the fatal month of September, 1792, were involved in the same dreadful fate.

Pethion, the Mayor of Paris, appeared next day at the bar, at the head of the municipality, to congratulate the Assembly on a great act of justice, which he declared resembled one of those thunder-storms by which nature purifies the atmosphere from noxious vapours. The ministry was dissolved by this severe

* This strange argument reminds us of an Essay read before a literary society in dispraise of the east wind, which the author supported by quotations from every poem or popular work, in which Eurus is the subject of invective. The learned auditors sustained the first part of this infiction with becoming fortitude, but declined submitting to the second, understanding that the accomplished author had there fortified himself by the numerous testimonies of almost all poets in favour of the west, and which, with logic similar to that of Monsieur Brissot in the text, he regarded as indirect testimony against the east wind.

blow on one of the wisest, at least one of the most moderate, of its members. Narbonne, and the Constitutional party who had espoused his cause, were soon made sensible, that he or they were to gain nothing by the impeachment, to which their intrigues led the way. Their claims to share the spoils of the displaced ministry were passed over with contempt, and the King was compelled, in order to have the least chance of obtaining a hearing from the Assembly, to select his ministers from the Brissotin, or Girondist faction, who, though averse to the existence of a monarchy, and desiring a republic instead, had still somewhat more of principle and morals than the mere Revolutionists and Jacobins, who were altogether destitute of both.

With the fall of De Lessart, all chance of peace vanished, as indeed it had been gradually disappearing before that event. The demands of the Austrian court went now, when fully explained, so far back upon the Revolution, that a peace negotiated upon such terms, must have laid France and all its various parties, (with the exception, perhaps, of a few of the first Assembly,) at the foot of the sovereign, and, what might be more dangerous, at the mercy of the restored emigrants. The Emperor demanded the establishment of monarchy in France, on the basis of the Royal Declaration of 23d June, 1789, which had been generally rejected by the Tiers Etat when offered to them by the King. He farther demanded, the restoration of the effects of the Church, and that the German Princes having rights in Alsace and Lorraine should be replaced in those rights, agreeably to the treaty of Westphalia.

The Legislative Assembly received these extravagant terms as an insult on the national dignity; and the King, whatever might be his sentiments as an individual, could not, on this occasion, dispense with the duty his office as Constitutional Monarch imposed on him. Louis, therefore, had the melancholy task of* proposing to an Assembly, filled with the enemies of his throne and person, a declaration of war against his brother-in-law the Emperor, in his capacity of King of Hungary and Bohemia, involving, as matter of course, a civil war with his own two brothers, who had taken the field at the head of that part of his subjects from birth and principle the most enthusiastically devoted to their sovereign's person, and who, if they had faults towards France, had committed them in love to him.

The proposal was speedily agreed to by the Assembly; for the Constitution-
alists saw their best remaining chance for power was by obtaining victory on the frontiers,—the Girondists had need of war, as what must necessarily lead the way to an alteration in the constitution, and the laying aside the regal government,—and the Jacobins, whose chief, Robespierre, had just objected enough to give him the character and credit of a prophet if any reverses were sustained, resisted the war no longer, but remained armed and watchful, to secure the advantage of events as they might occur.

* 20th April, 1792.

CHAPTER VIII.

Defeats of the French on the Frontier.—Decay of the Party of Constitutionnalists.—They form the Club of Feuillans, and are dispersed by the Jacobins forcibly.—The Ministry—Dumouriez—Versatility of his Character.—Breach of Confidence betwixt the King and his Ministers.—Dissolution of the King's Constitutional Guard.—Extravagant measures of the Jacobins—Alarms of the Girondists.—Departmental army proposed.—King puts his Veto on the Decree, against Dumouriez's Representations.—Decree against the Recusant Priests—King refuses it.—Letter of the Ministers to the King—He dismisses Roland, Claviere, and Servan.—Dumouriez, Duranton, and Lacoste, appointed in their stead.—King ratifies the Decree concerning the Departmental Army.—Dumouriez retorts against the late Ministers in the Assembly—Resigns, and departs for the Frontiers.—New Ministers named from the Constitutionnalists.—Insurrection of the 20th of June.—Armed Mob intrude into the Assembly—Thence into the Tuilleries.—Assembly send a Deputation to the Palace—And the Mob disperse.—La Fayette repairs to Paris—Remonstrates in favour of the King—But is compelled to return to the Frontiers, and leave him to his fate.—Marseillois appear in Paris.—Duke of Brunswick's Manifesto.—Its Operation against the King.

It is not our purpose here to enter into any detail of military events. It is sufficient to say, that the first results of the war were more disastrous than could have been expected, even from the want of discipline and state of mutiny in which this call to arms found the troops of France. If Austria, never quick at improving an opportunity, had possessed more forces on the Flemish frontier, or had even pressed her success with the troops she had, events might have occurred to influence, if not to alter, the fortunes of France and her King. They were inactive, however, and La Fayette, who was at the head of the army, exerted himself, not without effect, to rally the spirits of the French, and infuse discipline and confidence into their ranks. But he was able to secure no success of so marked a character as to correspond with the reputation he had acquired in America; so that as the Austrians were few in number, and not very decisive in their movements, the war seemed to languish on both sides.

In Paris, the absence of La Fayette had removed the main stay from the Constitutional interest, which were now nearly reduced to that state of nullity to which they had themselves reduced the party, first of pure Royalists, and then that of the *Moderés*, or friends of limited monarchy, in the first Assembly. The wealthier classes, indeed, continued a fruitless attachment to the Constitutionnalists, which gradually diminished with their decreased power to protect their friends. At length this became so contemptible, that their enemies were emboldened to venture upon an insult, which showed how little they were disposed to keep measures with a feeble adversary.

Among other plans, by which they hoped to counterpoise the omnipotence of the Jacobin Club, the Constitutionnalists had established a counter association, termed, from its place of meeting, Les Feuillans. In this Club,—which included about two hundred members of the Legislative Body, the ephemeral rival of the great jacobinical forge in which the Revolutionists had their strength and fabricated their thunders,—there was more eloquence, argument, learning, and wit, than was necessary; but the Feuillans wanted the terrible power of exciting the popular passions, which the orators of the Jacobin Club possessed and wielded at pleasure. These opposed factions might be compared to two swords, of which one had a gilded and ornamented hilt, but a blade formed of glass or other brittle substance, while the brazen handle of the other corresponded in strength and coarseness to the steel of the weapon itself. When two such

weapons come into collision, the consequence may be anticipated, and it was so with the opposite clubs. The Jacobins, after many preparatory insults, went down upon and assailed their adversaries with open force, insulting and dispersing them with blows and violence; while Pethion, the Mayor of Paris, who was present on the occasion, consoled the fugitives, by assuring them that the law indeed protected them, but the people having pronounced against them, it was not for him to enforce the behests of the law in opposition to the will of that people, from whom the law originated. A goodly medicine for their aching bones!

The Constitutional party, amidst their general humiliation, had lost almost all influence in the ministry, and could only communicate with the King underhand, and in a secret manner,—as if they had been in fact his friends and partisans, not the causes of, or willing consenters to, his present imprisoned and disabled condition. Of six ministers, by whom De Lessart and his comrades had been replaced, the husband of Madame Roland, and two others, Servan and Claviere, were zealous republicans; Duranthon and Lacoste were moderate in their politics, but timorous in character; the sixth, Dumouriez, who held the war department, was the personal rival of La Fayette, both in civil and military matters, and the enemy, therefore, of the Constitutional party. It is now, for the first time, that we mention one of those names renowned in military history, which had the address to attract Victory to the French banners, to which she so long appeared to adhere without shadow of changing. Dumouriez passed early from the scene, but left his name strongly written in the annals of France.

Dumouriez was little in person, but full of vivacity and talent; a brave soldier, having distinguished himself in the civil dissensions of Poland; an able and skilful intriguer, and well fitted to play a conspicuous part in times of public confusion. He has never been supposed to possess any great firmness of principle, whether public or private; but a soldier's honour, and a soldier's frankness, together with the habits of good society, led him to condemn and hate the sordid treachery, cruelty, and cynicism of the Jacobins; while his wit and common sense enabled him to see through and deride the affected and pedantic fanaticism of republican zeal of the Girondists, who, he plainly saw, were amusing themselves with schemes to which the country of France, the age, and the state of manners, were absolutely opposed. Thus, he held the situation of minister at war, coquetting with all parties; wearing one evening in the Jacobin Club the red nightcap, which was the badge of breechless freedom, and the next, with better sincerity, advising the King how he might avoid the approaching evils; though the by-roads he pointed out were often too indirect to be trodden by the good and honest prince, to whom Providence had, in Dumouriez, assigned a counsellor better fitted to a less scrupulous sovereign. The King nevertheless reposed considerable confidence in the general, which, if not answered with all the devotion of loyalty, was at least never betrayed.

The Republican ministers were scarce qualified by their talents, to assume the air of Areopagites, or Roman tribunes. Roland, by himself, was but a tiresome pedant, and he could not bring his wife to the cabinet council, although it is said she attempted to make her way to the ministerial dinners.* His colleagues were of the same character, and affected in their intercourse with the King a stoical contempt of the forms of the court, although, in effect, these are like other courtesies of society, which it costs little to observe, and is brutal to neglect.† Besides petty insults of this sort, there was a total want of

* So says Des Ferrieres, and pretends that Madame Roland's pretensions to be presented at the ministerial parties being rejected, was the first breach to the amicable understanding of the ministers. But nothing of this sort is to be found in Madame Roland's Memoires, and we are confident she would have recorded it, had the fact been accurate.

† When Roland, whose dress was somewhat like that of a Quaker, appeared at court in shoe-strings, the usher approached him with a severe look, and addressed him, "How, sir, no buckles?"—"Ah," said Dumouriez, who laughed at all and at everything, "all is lost."

confidence on both sides, in the intercourse betwixt them and the King. If the ministers were desirous to penetrate his sentiments on any particular subject, Louis evaded them by turning the discourse on matters of vague and general import; and did he, on the other hand, press them to adopt any particular measure, they were cold and reserved, and excused themselves under the shelter of their personal responsibility. Indeed, how was it possible that confidence could exist betwixt the King and his Republican ministers, when the principal object of the latter was to procure the abolition of the regal dignity, and when the former was completely aware that such was their purpose?

The first step adopted by the factions of Girondists and Jacobins, who moved towards the same object side by side, though not hand in hand, was to deprive the King of a guard, assigned him by the Constitution, in lieu of his disbanded *Gardes de Corps*. It was, indeed, of doubtful loyalty, being partly levied from soldiers of the line, partly from the citizens, and imbued in many cases with the revolutionary spirit of the day; but they were officered by persons selected for their attachment to the King, and even their name of Guards expressed and inspired an *esprit de corps*, which might be formidable. Various causes of suspicion were alleged against this guard—that they kept in their barracks a white flag (which proved to be the ornament of a cake presented to them by the Dauphin)—that their sword-hilts were formed into the fashion of a cock, which announced some anti-revolutionary enigma—that attempts were made to alienate them from the Assembly, and fix their affections on the King. The guard contained several spies, who had taken that service for the purpose of betraying its secrets to the Jacobins. Three or four of these men, produced at the bar, affirmed much that was, and much that was not true; and amid the causes they had for distrusting the King, and their reasons for desiring to weaken him, the Assembly decreed the reduction of the Constitutional Guard. The King was with difficulty persuaded not to oppose his *Veto*, and was thus left almost totally undefended to the next blast of the revolutionary tempest.

Every successive proceeding of the factions tended to show more strongly, that the storm was speedily to arise. The invention of the Jacobins exhausted itself in proposing and adopting revolutionary measures so extravagant, that very shame prevented the Girondists from becoming parties to them. Such was the carrying the atrocious cut-throat Jourdain in triumph through the streets of Avignon, where he had piled eighty carcasses into a *glacière* in the course of one night. A less atrocious, but not less insolent proceeding, was the feast given in honour of the regiment of Chateau Vaux, whose mutiny had been put down at Nancy by Monsieur de Bouillé, acting under the express decree of the first National Assembly.

In a word, understanding much better than the Brissotins the taste of the vulgar for what was most violent, gross, and exaggerated, the Jacobins purveyed for them accordingly, filled their ears with the most incredible reports, and gulled their eyes by the most absurd pageants.

The Girondists, retaining some taste and some principle, were left far behind in the race of vulgar popularity, where he that throws off every mark of decency bids most fair to gain the prize. They beheld with mortification feats which they could not emulate, and felt that their own assertions of their attachment to freedom, emphatic as they were, seemed cold and spiritless compared to the extravagant and flaming declamations of the Jacobins. They regarded with envy the advantages which their rivals acquired by those exaggerated proceedings, and were startled to find how far they were like to be outstripped by those uncompromising and unhesitating demagogues. The Girondists became sensible that a struggle approached, in which, notwithstanding their strength in the Assembly, they must be vanquished, unless they could raise up some body of forces, entirely dependent on themselves, to be opposed in time of need to the Jacobin insurgents. This was indeed essentially necessary to their personal

safety, and to the stability of their power. If they looked to the National Guard, they found such of that body as were no longer attached to La Fayette wearied of revolutions, unmoved by the prospect of a republic, and only desirous to protect their shops and property. If they turned their eyes to the lower orders, and especially the suburbs, the myriads of pikemen which they could pour forth were all devoted to the Jacobins, from whom their leaders received orders and regular pay.

The scheme of a departmental army was resorted to by the Girondists as the least startling, yet most certain mode of bringing together a military force sufficient to support the schemes of the new administration. Five men were to be furnished by every canton in France, which would produce a body of 20,000 troops to be armed and trained under the walls of Paris. This force was to serve as a central army to reinforce the soldiers on the frontier, and maintain order in the capital, as occasion should demand. The measure, proposed by the Girondists, was unexpectedly furthered by the Jacobins, who plainly saw, that through the means of their affiliated societies, which existed in every canton, they would be able to dictate the choice of so large a part of the departmental army, that, when assembled, it should add to the power of their insurrectionary bands at Paris, instead of controlling them.

The citizens of Paris were disposed to consider this concourse of undisciplined troops under the walls of the city as dangerous to its safety, and an insult to the National Guard, hitherto thought adequate to the defence of the metropolis. They petitioned the Assembly against the measure, and even invoked the King to reject the decree, when it should pass through that body.

To this course Louis was himself sufficiently inclined, for neither he nor any one doubted that the real object of the Girondists was to bring together such an army, as would enable them to declare their beloved republic without fear of La Fayette, even if he should find himself able to bring the army which he commanded to his own sentiments on the subject.

Dumouriez warned Louis against following this course of direct opposition to the Assembly. He allowed, that the ultimate purpose of the proposal was evident to every thinking person, but still its ostensible object being the protection of the country and capital, the King, he said, would, in the eyes of the vulgar, be regarded as a favourer of the foreign invasion, if he objected to a measure represented as essential to the protection of Paris. He undertook, as Minister of War, that as fast as a few hundreds of the departmental forces arrived, he would have them regimented and dismissed to the frontier, where their assistance was more necessary than at home. But all his remonstrances on this subject were in vain. Louis resolved at all risks to place his *Veto* on the measure. He probably relied on the feelings of the National Guard, of which one or two divisions were much attached to him, while the dispositions of the whole had been certainly ameliorated, from their fear of fresh confusion by means of these new levies. Perhaps, also, the King could not bring himself at once to trust the versatile disposition of Dumouriez, whose fidelity, however, we see no reason for suspecting.

Another renewed point of discussion and disagreement betwixt the King and his ministers, respected the recusant clergy. A decree was passed in the Assembly, that such priests as might be convicted of a refusal to subscribe the oath to the civil Constitution, should be liable to deportation. This was a point of conscience with Louis, and was probably brought forward in order to hasten him into a resignation of the crown. He stood firm accordingly, and determined to oppose his *Veto* to this decree also, in spite at once of all the arguments which the worldly prudence of Dumouriez could object, and of the urgency of the Republican ministers.

The firm refusal of the King disconcerted the measures of the Girondist counsellors. Madame Roland undertook to make the too scrupulous monarch see

the errors of his ways; and composed, in name of her husband and two of his colleagues, a long letter, to which Dumouriez and the other two refused to place their names. It was written in what the Citoyenne termed an austere tone of truth; that is to say, without any of the usual marks of deference and respect, and with a harshness calculated to jar all the feelings, affectionate or religious, of him whom they still called King. Alas! the severest and most offensive truths, however late in reaching the ears of powerful and prosperous monarchs, make themselves sternly loud to those princes who are captive and unfriended. Louis might have replied to this rude expostulation like the knight who received a blow from an enemy when he was disarmed, and a prisoner,—“There is little bravery in this *now*.” The King, however, gave way to his resentment as far as he could. He dismissed Roland and the other two ministers, and with difficulty prevailed on Dumouriez, Duranthon, and Lacoste, to retain their situations, and endeavoured to supply the place of those whom he had deprived of office; but he was obliged to purchase their adherence, by ratifying the decree concerning the federal or departmental army of twenty thousand men, on condition that they should rendezvous at Soissons, not at Paris. On the decree against the priests, his resolution continued unmoved, and immovable. Thus Religion, which had for half a century been so slightly regarded in France, at length interposed her influence in deciding the fate of the King and the kingdom.

The three discarded ministers affected to congratulate each other on being released from scenes so uncongenial to their republican virtues and sentiments, as the anti-chambers of a court, where men were forced to wear buckles instead of shoe-strings, or undergo the frowns of ushers and masters of ceremonies, and where patriotic tongues were compelled to practise court-language, and to address a being of the same flesh and blood as their own, with the titles of Sire, and your Majesty. The unhappy pedants were not long in learning that there are constraints worse to undergo than the etiquette of a court, and sterner despots to be found in the ranks of a republic, than the good-humoured and lenient Louis. As soon as dismissed, they posted to the Assembly, to claim the applause due to suffering virtue, and to exhibit their letter to those for whose ears it was really written—the sympathising democrats and the tribunes.

They were accordingly, as victims of their democratic zeal, received with acclamation; but the triumph of those who bestowed it, was unexpectedly qualified and diminished. Dumouriez, who spoke fluently, and had collected proofs for such a moment, overwhelmed the Assembly by a charge of total neglect and incapacity, against Roland and his two colleagues. He spoke of unrecruited armies, ungarrisoned forts, unprovided commissariats, in a tone which compelled the Assembly to receive his denunciations against his late associates in the ministry.

But although his unpleasant and threatening communications made a momentary impression on the Assembly, almost in spite of themselves, the wily and variable orator saw that he could only maintain his ground as minister, by procuring, if possible, the assent of the King to the decree against the recalcitrant clergy. He made a final attempt, along with his ephemeral colleagues; stated his conviction, that the refusal of the King, if persisted in, would be the cause of insurrection; and, finally, tendered his resignation, in case their urgent advice should be neglected. “Think not to terrify me by threats,” replied Louis. “My resolution is fixed.” Dumouriez was not a man to perish under the ruins of the throne which he could not preserve. His resignation was again tendered and accepted, not without marks of sensibility on the King’s part and his own; and having thus saved a part of his credit with the Assembly, who respected his talents, and desired to use them against the in-

vaders, he departed from Paris to the frontiers, to lead the van among the French victors.

Louis was now left to the pitiless storm of revolution, without the assistance of any one who could in the least assist him in piloting through the tempest. The few courtiers—or, much better named—the few ancient and attached friends, who remained around his person, possessed neither talents nor influence to aid him; they could but lament his misfortunes and share his ruin. He himself expressed a deep conviction, that his death was near at hand, yet the apprehension neither altered his firmness upon points to which he esteemed his conscience was party, nor changed the general quiet placidity of his temper. A negotiation to resign his crown was, perhaps, the only mode which remained, affording even a chance to avert his fate; but the days of deposed monarchs are seldom long, and no pledge could have assured Louis that any terms which the Girondists might grant, would have been ratified by their sterner and uncompromising rivals of the Jacobin party. These men had been long determined to make his body the step to their iniquitous power. They affected to feel for the cause of the people, with the zeal which goes to slaying. They had heaped upon the crown, and its unhappy wearer, all the guilt and all the misfortunes of the Revolution; it was incumbent on them to show that they were serious in their charge, by rendering Louis a sin-offering for the nation. On the whole, it was the more kingly part not to degrade himself by his own voluntary act, but to await the period which was to close at once his life and his reign. He named his last ministry from the dispirited remnants of the Constitutional party, which still made a feeble and unsupported struggle against the Girondists and Jacobins in the Assembly. They did not long enjoy their precarious office.

The factions last named were now united in the purpose of precipitating the King from his throne by actual and direct force. The voice of the Girondists Vergniaud had already proclaimed in the Assembly. "Terror," he said, "must, in the name of the people, burst its way into yonder palace, whence she has so often sallied forth at the command of monarchs."

Though the insurrection was resolved upon, and thus openly announced, each faction was jealous of the force which the other was to employ, and apprehensive of the use which might be made of it against themselves, after the conquest was obtained. But, however suspicious of each other, they were still more desirous of their common object, the destruction of the throne, and the erection of a republic, which the Brissotins supposed they could hold under their rule, and which the Jacobins were determined to retain under their misrule. An insurrection was at length arranged, which had all the character of that which brought the King a prisoner from Versailles, the Jacobins being the prime movers of their desperate followers, and the actors on both occasions; while the Girondists, on the 20th June 1792, hoped, like the Constitutionalists on the 6th October 1789, to gain the advantage of the enterprise which their own force would have been unable to accomplish. The community, or magistracy, of Paris, which was entirely under the dominion of Robespierre, Danton, and the Jacobins, had been long providing for such an enterprise, and under pretext that they were arming the lower classes against invasion, had distributed pikes and other weapons to the rabble, who were to be used on this occasion.

On the 20th June, the sansculottes of the suburbs of Saint Marceau and Saint Antoine assembled together, armed with pikes, scythes, hay-forks, and weapons of every description, whether those actually forged for the destruction of mankind, or those which, invented for peaceful purposes, are readily converted by popular fury into offensive arms. They seemed, notwithstanding their great numbers, to act under authority, and amid their cries, their songs,

their dances, and the wild intermixture of grotesque and fearful revel, appeared to move by command, and to act with an unanimity that gave the effect of order to that which was in itself confusion. They were divided into bodies, and had their leaders. Standards also were displayed, carefully selected to express the character and purpose of the wretches who were assembled under them. One ensign was a pair of tattered breeches, with the motto, "*Vivent les Sans Culottes.*" Another ensign-bearer, dressed in black, carried on a long pole a hog's harslet, that is, part of the entrails of that animal, still bloody, with the legend, "*La fressure d'un Aristocrate.*" This formidable assemblage was speedily recruited by the mob of Paris, to an immense multitude, whose language, gestures, and appearance, all combined to announce some violent catastrophe.

The terrified citizens, afraid of general pillage, concentrated themselves,—not to defend the King or protect the National Assembly, but for the preservation of the Palais Royale, where the splendour of the shops was most likely to attract the cupidity of the sansculottes. A strong force of armed citizens guarded all the avenues to this temple of Mammon, and, by excluding the insurgents from its precincts, showed what they could have done for the Hall of the Legislature, or the palace of the monarch, had the cause of either found favour in their eyes.

The insurrection rolled on to the Hall of the Assembly, surrounded the alarmed deputies, and filled with armed men every avenue of approach; talked of a petition which they meant to present, and demanded to file through the Hall to display the force by which it was supported. The terrified members had nothing better to reply, than by a request that the insurgents should only enter the Assembly by a representative deputation—at least that, coming in a body, they should leave their arms behind. The formidable petitioners laughed at both proposals, and poured through the Hall, shaking in triumph their insurrectionary weapons. The Assembly, meanwhile, made rather an ignoble figure; and their attempts to preserve an outward appearance of indifference, and even of cordiality towards their foul and frightful visitants, have been aptly compared to a band of wretched comedians, endeavouring to mitigate the resentment of a brutal and incensed audience.*

From the Hall of the Assembly, the populace rushed to the Tuilleries. Preparations had been made for defence, and several bodies of troops were judiciously placed, who, with the advantages afforded by the grates and walls, might have defended their posts against the armed rabble which approached. But there was neither union, loyalty, nor energy, in those to whom the defence was intrusted, nor did the King, by placing himself at their head, attempt to give animation to their courage.

The National Guards drew off at the command of the two municipal officers, decked with their scarfs of office, who charged them not to oppose the will of the people. The grates were dashed to pieces with sledge hammers. The gates of the palace itself were shut, but the rabble, turning a cannon upon them, compelled entrance, and those apartments of royal magnificence,

* It may be alleged in excuse, that the Assembly had no resource but submission. Yet, brave men in similar circumstances have, by a timely exertion of spirit, averted similar insolencies. When the furious Anti-Catholic mob was in possession of the avenues to, and even the lobbies of, the House of Commons, in 1780, General Cosmo Gordon, a member of the House, went up to the unfortunate nobleman under whose guidance they were supposed to act, and addressed him thus: "My lord, is it your purpose to bring your rascally adherents into the House of Commons?—for if so, I apprise you, that the instant one of them enters, I pass my sword, not through his body, but your lordship's." The hint was sufficient, and the mob was directed to another quarter. Undoubtedly there were, in the French Legislative Assembly, men capable of conjuring down the storm they had raised, and who might have been moved to do so, had any man of courage made them directly and personally responsible for the consequences.

so long the pride of France, were laid open to the multitude, like those of Troy to her invaders;—

Apparet domus intus, et atria longa patescunt,
Apparent Priami et veterum penetralia regum.*

The august palace of the proud house of Bourbon lay thus exposed to the rude gaze, and vulgar tread, of a brutal and ferocious rabble. Who dared have prophesied such an event to the royal founders of this stately pile, to the chivalrous Henry of Navarre, or the magnificent Louis XIV. !—The door of the apartment entering into the vestibule was opened by the hands of Louis himself, the ill-fated representative of this lofty line. He escaped with difficulty the thrust of a bayonet, made as the door was in the act of expanding. There were around him a handful of courtiers, and a few of the grenadiers of the National Guard, belonging to the section of Filles Saint Thomas, which had been always distinguished for fidelity. They hurried and almost forced the King into the embrasure of a window, erected a sort of barricade in front with tables, and stood beside him as his defenders. The crowd, at their first entrance, levelled their pikes at Madame Elizabeth, whom they mistook for the Queen. “Why did you undeceive them?” said the heroic princess to those around her—“It might have saved the life of my sister.” Even the insurgents were affected by this trait of heroism. They had encountered none of those obstacles which chafe such minds, and make them thirsty of blood, and it would seem that their leaders had not received decided orders, or, having received them, did not think the time served for their execution. The insurgents defiled through the apartments, and passed the King, now joined by the Queen with her children. The former, though in the utmost personal danger, would not be separated from her husband, exclaiming, that her post was by his side; the latter were weeping with terror at a scene so horrible.

The people seemed moved, or rather their purpose was deprived of that energetic unanimity which had hitherto carried them so far. Some shouted against the veto—some against the unconstitutional priests, some more modestly called out for lowering the price of bread and butcher-meat. One of them flung a red cap to the King, who quietly drew it upon his head; another offered him a bottle, and commanded him to drink to the Nation. No glass could be had, and he was obliged to drink out of the bottle. These incidents are grotesque and degrading, but they are redeemed by one of much dignity. “Fear nothing, Sire,” said one of the faithful grenadiers of the National Guard who defended him. The King took his hand, and pressing it to his heart, replied, “Judge yourself if I fear.”

Various leaders of the Republicans were present at this extraordinary scene, in the apartments, or in the garden, and expressed themselves according to their various sentiments. “What a figure they have made of him with the red night-cap and the bottle!” said Manuel, the Procureur of the Commune of Paris.—“What a magnificent spectacle!” said the artist David, looking out upon the tumultuary sea of pikes, agitated by fifty thousand hands, as they rose and sunk, welked and waved;—“Tremble, tremble, tyrants!”—“They are in a fair train,” said the fierce Gorsas; “we shall soon see their pikes garnished with several heads.” The crowds who thrust forward into the palace

* Dryden has expanded these magnificent lines, without expressing entirely either their literal meaning or their spirit. But he has added, as usual, beautiful ideas of his own, equally applicable to the scene described in the text:

A mighty breach is made; the rooms conceal'd
Appear, and all the palace is reveal'd;
The halls of audience, and of public state,
And where the lovely Queen in secret sate;
Arm'd soldiers now by trembling maids are seen,
With not a door, and scarce a space between.—*Æneid*, Book II.

and the presence, were pressed together till the heat increased almost to suffocation, nor did there appear any end to the confusion.

Late and slow, the Legislative Assembly did at length send a deputation of twenty-five members to the palace. Their arrival put an end to the tumult; for Pethion, the Mayor of Paris, and the other authorities, who had hitherto been well nigh passive, now exerted themselves to clear away the armed populace from the palace and gardens, and were so readily obeyed, that it was evident that similar efforts would have entirely prevented the insurrection. The "poor and virtuous people," as Robespierre used to call them, with an affected unction of pronunciation, retired for once with their pikes unbloodied, not a little marvelling why they had been called together for such a harmless purpose.

That a mine so formidable should have exploded without effect, gave some momentary advantages to the party at whose safety it was aimed. Men of worth exclaimed against the infamy of such a gratuitous insult to the Crown, while it was still called a Constitutional authority. Men of substance dreaded the recurrence of such acts of revolutionary violence, and the commencement of riots, which were likely to end in pillage. Petitions were presented to the Assembly, covered with the names of thousands, praying that the leaders of the insurgents should be brought to punishment; while the King demanded, in a tone which seemed to appeal to France and to Europe, some satisfaction for his insulted dignity, the violation of his palace, and the danger of his person. But La Fayette, at the head of an army whose affections he was supposed to possess, was the most formidable intercessor. He had two or three days before transmitted to the Assembly a letter, or rather a remonstrance, in which, speaking in the name of the army, as well as his own, he expressed the highest dissatisfaction with the recent events at Paris, complaining of the various acts of violation of the constitution, and the personal disrespect offered to the King. This letter of itself had been accounted an enormous offence, both by the Jacobins and the Girondists; but the tumult of the 20th of June roused the General to bolder acts of intercession.

On the 28th of the same month of June, all parties heard with as much interest as anxiety, that General La Fayette was in Paris. He came, indeed, only with a part of his staff. Had he brought with him a moderate body of troops upon whom he could have absolutely depended, his presence so supported, in addition to his influence in Paris, would have settled the point at issue. But the General might hesitate to diminish the French army then in front of the enemy, and by doing so to take on himself the responsibility of what might happen in his absence; or, as it appeared from subsequent events, he may not have dared to repose the necessary confidence in any corps of his army, so completely had they been imbued with the revolutionary spirit. Still his arrival, thus slightly attended, indicated a confidence in his own resources, which was calculated to strike the opposite party with anxious apprehension.

He appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and addressed the members in a strain of decision which had not been lately heard on the part of those who pleaded the royal cause in that place. He denounced the authors of the violence committed on the 20th of June, declared that several corps of his army had addressed him, and that he came to express their horror as well as his own at the rapid progress of faction; and to demand that such measures should be taken as to ensure the defenders of France, that while they were shedding their blood on the frontiers, the Constitution, for which they combated, should not be destroyed by traitors in the interior. This speech, delivered by a man of great courage and redoubted influence, had considerable effect. The Girondists, indeed, proposed to inquire, whether La Fayette had permission from the Minister of War to leave the command of his army; and sneeringly affirmed, that the Austrians must needs have retreated from the frontier, since the General of the French army had returned to Paris: but a considerable

majority preferred the motion of the Constitutionalist Ramond, who, eulogising La Fayette as the eldest son of liberty, proposed an inquiry into the causes and object of those factious proceedings of which he had complained.

Thus happily commenced La Fayette's daring enterprize; but those by whom he expected to be supported did not rally around him. To disperse the Jacobin Club was probably his object, but no sufficient force gathered about him to encourage the attempt. He ordered for the next day a general review of the National Guards, in hopes, doubtless, that they would have recognized the voice which they had obeyed with such unanimity of submission; but this civic force was by no means in the state in which he had left them at his departure. The several corps of grenadiers, which were chiefly drawn from the more opulent classes, had been, under pretence of the general principle of equality, melted down and united with those composed of men of an inferior description, and who had a more decided revolutionary tendency. Many officers, devoted to La Fayette and the Constitution, had been superseded; and the service was, by studied contumely and ill usage, rendered disgusting to those who avowed the same sentiments, or displayed any remaining attachment to the sovereign. By such means Pethion, the Mayor of Paris, had now authority enough with the civic army to prevent the review from taking place. A few grenadiers of different sections did indeed muster, but their number was so small that they dispersed in haste and alarm.

The Girondists and Jacobins, closely united at this crisis, began to take heart, yet dared not on their part venture to arrest the General. Meantime La Fayette saw no other means of saving the King than to propose his anew attempting an escape from Paris, which he offered to further by every means in his power. The plan was discussed, but dismissed in consequence of the Queen's prejudices against La Fayette, whom, not unnaturally, (though as far as regarded intention certainly unjustly,) she regarded as the original author of the King's misfortunes. After two days lingering in Paris, La Fayette found it necessary to return to the army which he commanded, and leave the King to his fate.

La Fayette's conduct on this occasion may always be opposed to any aspersions thrown on his character at the commencement of the Revolution; for, unquestionably, in June 1792, he exposed his own life to the most imminent danger in order to protect that of the King, and the existence of royalty. Yet he must himself have felt a lesson, which his fate may teach to others; how perilous, namely, it is, to set the example of violent and revolutionary courses, and what dangerous precedents such rashness may afford to those who use similar means for carrying events to still farther extremities. The march to Versailles, 6th October 1789, in which La Fayette to a certain degree co-operated, and of which he reaped all the immediate advantage, had been the means of placing Louis in that precarious situation from which he was now so generously anxious to free him. It was no less La Fayette's own act, by means of his personal aide-de-camp, to bring back the person of the King to Paris from Varennes; whereas he was now recommending, and offering to further his escape, by precisely such measures as his interference had then thwarted.

Notwithstanding the low state of the royal party, one constituted authority, amongst so many, had the courage to act offensively on the weaker and the injured side. The Directory of the Department (or province) of Paris, declared against the Mayor, imputed to him the blame of the scandalous excesses of the 20th of June, and suspended him and Manuel, the Procureur of the Community of Paris, from their offices. This judgment was affirmed by the King. But, under the protection of the Girondists and Jacobins, Pethion appealed to the Assembly, where the demon of discord seemed now let loose, as the advantage was contended for by at least three parties, avowedly distinct

from each other, together with innumerable subdivisions of opinion. And yet, in the midst of such complicated and divided interests, such various and furious passions, two individuals, a lady and a bishop, undertook to restore general concord, and, singular to tell, they had a momentary success. Olympia des Gouges was an ardent lover of liberty, but she united with this passion an intense feeling of devotion, and a turn like that entertained by our friends the Quakers, and other sects who affect a transcendental love of the human kind, and interpret the doctrines of Christian morality in the most strict and literal sense. This person had sent abroad several publications recommending to all citizens of France, and the deputies especially of the Assembly, to throw aside personal views, and form a brotherly and general union with heart and hand, in the service of the public.

The same healing overture, as it would have been called in the civil dissensions of England, was brought before the Assembly,* and recommended by the constitutional Bishop of Lyons, the Abbé L'Amourette. This good-natured orator affected to see, in the divisions which rent the Assembly to pieces, only the result of an unfortunate error—a mutual misunderstanding of each other's meaning. "You," he said to the Republican members, "are afraid of an undue attachment to aristocracy; you dread the introduction of the English system of two Chambers into the Constitution. You of the right hand, on the contrary, misconstrue your peaceful and ill-understood brethren, so far as to suppose them capable of renouncing monarchy, as established by the Constitution. What then remains to extinguish these fatal divisions, but for each party to disown the designs falsely imputed to them, and for the Assembly united to swear anew their devotion to the Constitution, as it has been bequeathed to us by the Constituent Assembly!"

This speech, wonderful as it may seem, had the effect of magic; the deputies of every faction, Royalist, Constitutionalist, Girondist, Jacobin, and Orleanist, rushed into each other's arms, and mixed tears with the solemn oaths by which they renounced the innovations supposed to be imputed to them. The King was sent for to enjoy this spectacle of concord, so strangely and so unexpectedly renewed. But the feeling, though strong,—and it might be with many overpowering for the moment,—was but like oil spilt on the raging sea, or rather like a shot fired across the waves of a torrent, which, though it counteracts them by its momentary impulse, cannot for a second alter their course. The factions, like Le Sage's demons, detested each other the more for having been compelled to embrace, and from the name and country of the benevolent bishop, the scene was long called, in ridicule, *Le Baiser d'Amourette*, and *La reconciliation Normande*.

The next public ceremony showed how little party spirit had been abated by this singular scene. The King's acceptance of the Constitution was repeated in the Champ de Mars before the Federates, or deputies sent up to represent the various departments of France; and the figure made by the King during that pageant, formed a striking and melancholy parallel with his actual condition in the state. With hair powdered and dressed, with clothes embroidered in the ancient court-fashion, surrounded and crowded unceremoniously by men of the lowest rank, and in the most wretched garbs, he seemed something belonging to a former age, but which in the present has lost its fashion and value. He was conducted to the Champ de Mars under a strong guard, and by a circuitous route, to avoid the insults of the multitude, who dedicated their applauses to the Girondist Mayor of Paris, exclaiming "Petition or Death!" When he ascended the altar to go through the ceremonial of the day, all were struck with the resemblance to a victim led to sacrifice, and the Queen so much so, that she exclaimed and nearly fainted. A few

* 9th July.

children alone called, *Vive le Roi!* This was the last time Louis was seen in public until he mounted the scaffold.

The departure of La Fayette renewed the courage of the Girondists, and they proposed a decree of impeachment against him in the Assembly; but the spirit which the General's presence had awakened was not yet extinguished, and his friends in the Assembly undertook his defence with a degree of unexpected courage, which alarmed their antagonists. Nor could their fears be termed groundless. The Constitutional General might march his army upon Paris, or he might make some accommodation with the foreign invaders, and receive assistance from them to accomplish such a purpose. It seemed to the Girondists, that no time was to be lost. They determined not to trust to the Jacobins, to whose want of resolution they seem to have ascribed the failure of the insurrection on the 20th of June. They resolved upon occasion of the next effort, to employ some part of that departmental force, which was now approaching Paris in straggling bodies, under the name of Federates. The affiliated clubs had faithfully obeyed the mandates of the parent society of the Jacobins, by procuring that the most stanch and exalted Revolutionists should be sent on this service. These men, or the greater part of them, chose to visit Paris, rather than to pass straight to their rendezvous at Soissons. As they believed themselves the armed representatives of the country, they behaved with all the insolence which the consciousness of bearing arms gives to those who are unaccustomed to discipline. They walked in large bodies in the Garden of the Tuilleries, and when any persons of the royal family appeared, they insulted the ladies with obscene language and indecent songs, the men with the most hideous threats. The Girondists resolved to frame a force, which might be called their own, out of such formidable materials.

Barbaroux, one of the most enthusiastic admirers of the Revolution, a youth, like the Seid of Voltaire's tragedy, filled with the most devoted enthusiasm for a cause of which he never suspected the truth, offered to bring up a battalion of Federates from his native city of Marseilles, men, as he describes them, who knew how to die, and who, as it proved, understood at least as well how to kill. In raking up the disgusting history of mean and bloody-minded demagogues, it is impossible not to dwell on the contrast afforded by the generous and self-devoted character of Barbaroux, who, young, handsome, generous, noble-minded, and disinterested, sacrificed his family-happiness, his fortune, and finally his life, to an enthusiastic though mistaken zeal for the liberty of his country. He had become from the commencement of the Revolution one of its greatest champions at Marseilles, where it had been forwarded and opposed by all the fervour of faction, influenced by the southern sun. He had admired the extravagant writings of Marat and Robespierre; but when he came to know them personally, he was disgusted with their low sentiments and savage dispositions, and went to worship Freedom amongst the Girondists, where her shrine was served by the fair and accomplished Citoyenne Roland.

The Marseillois, besides the advantage of this enthusiastic leader, marched to the air of the finest hymn to which liberty or the Revolution had yet given birth. They appeared in Paris, where it had been agreed between the Jacobins and the Girondists, that the strangers should be welcomed by the fraternity of the suburbs, and whatever other force the factions could command. Thus united, they were to march to secure the municipality, occupy the bridges and principal posts of the city with detached parties, while the main body should proceed to form an encampment in the Garden of the Tuilleries, where the conspirators had no doubt they should find themselves sufficiently powerful to exact the King's resignation, or declare his forfeiture.

This plan failed through the cowardice of Santerre, the chief leader of the insurgents of the suburbs, who had engaged to meet the Marseillois with forty thousand men. Very few of the promised auxiliaries appeared; but the un-

dismayed Marseillois, though only about five hundred in number, marched through the city to the terror of the inhabitants, their keen black eyes seeming to seek out aristocratic victims, and their songs partaking of the wild Moorish character that lingers in the south of France, denouncing vengeance on kings, priests, and nobles.

In the Tuilleries the Federates fixed a quarrel on some grenadiers of the National Guard, who were attached to the Constitution, and giving instant way to their habitual impetuosity, attacked, defeated, and dispersed them. In the riot, Espremenil, who had headed the opposition to the will of the King in Parliament, which led the way to the Convocation of Estates, and who had been once the idol of the people, but now had become the object of their hate, was cut down and about to be massacred. "Assist me," he called out to Pethion, who had come to the scene of confusion,—“I am Espremenil—once, as you are now, the minion of the people's love.” Pethion, not unmoved, it is to be supposed, at the terms of the appeal, hastened to rescue him. Not long afterwards both suffered by the guillotine, which was the bloody conclusion of so many popular favourites. The riot was complained of by the Constitutional party, but as usual it was explained by a declaration on the part of ready witnesses, that the forty civic soldiers had insulted and attacked the five hundred Marseillois, and therefore brought the disaster upon themselves.

Meanwhile, though their hands were strengthened by this band of unscrupulous and devoted implements of their purpose, the Girondists failed totally in their attempt against La Fayette in the Assembly, the decree of accusation against him being rejected by a victorious majority. They were therefore induced to resort to measures of direct violence, which unquestionably they would willingly have abstained from, since they could not attempt them without giving a perilous superiority to the Jacobin faction. The manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, and his arrival on the French frontier at the head of a powerful Prussian army, acted upon the other motives for insurrection, as a high pressure upon a steam-engine, producing explosion.

It was the misfortune of Louis, as we have often noticed, to be as frequently injured by the false measures of his friends as by the machinations of his enemies; and this proclamation, issued by a monarch who had taken arms in the King's cause, was couched in language intolerable to the feelings even of such Frenchmen as might still retain towards their King some sentiments of loyalty. All towns or villages which should offer the slightest resistance to the allies, were in this ill-timed manifesto menaced with fire and sword. Paris was declared responsible for the safety of Louis, and the most violent threats of the total subversion of that great metropolis were denounced as the penalty.

The Duke of Brunswick was undoubtedly induced to assume this tone, by the ease which he had experienced in putting down the revolution in Holland; but the cases were by no means parallel. Holland was a country much divided in political opinions, and there was existing among the constituted authorities a strong party in favour of the Stadtholder. France, on the contrary, excepting only the emigrants who were in the Duke's own army, were united, like the Jews of old, against foreign invasion, though divided into many bitter factions amongst themselves. Above all, the comparative strength of France and Holland were so different, that a force which might overthrow the one country without almost a struggle, would scarce prove sufficient to wrest from such a nation as France even the most petty of her frontier fortresses. It cannot be doubted, that this haughty and insolent language on the part of the invaders irritated the personal feelings of every true Frenchman, and determined them to the most obstinate resistance against invaders, who were confident enough to treat them as a conquered people, even before a skirmish had been fought. The imprudence of the allied General recoiled on the unfortunate Louis, on whose account he used this menacing language. Men began to consider his

cause as identified with that of the invaders, of course as standing in diametrical opposition to that of the country; and these opinions spread generally among the citizens of Paris. To animate the citizens to their defence, the Assembly declared that the country was in danger; and in order that the annunciation might be more impressive, cannon were hourly discharged from the hospital *des Invalides*—bands of military music traversed the streets—bodies of men were drawn together hastily, as if the enemy were at the gates—and all the hurried and hasty movements of the constituted authorities seemed to announce, that the invaders were within a day's march of Paris.

These distracting and alarming movements, with the sentiments of fear and anxiety which they were qualified to inspire, aggravated the unpopularity of Louis, in whose cause his brothers and his allies were now threatening the metropolis of France. From these concurring circumstances the public voice was indeed so strongly against the cause of monarchy, that the Girondists ventured by their organ, Vergniaud, to accuse the King in the Assembly of holding intelligence with the enemy, or at least of omitting sufficient defensive preparations, and proposed in express terms that they should proceed to declare his forfeiture. The orator, however, did not press this motion, willing, doubtless, that the power of carrying through and enforcing such a decree should be completely ascertained, which could only be after a mortal struggle with the last defenders of the Crown; but when a motion like this could be made and seconded, it showed plainly how little respect was preserved for the King in the Assembly at large. For this struggle all parties were arranging their forces, and it became every hour more evident, that the capital was speedily to be the scene of some dreadful event.

CHAPTER IX.

The Day of the 10th of August—Tocsin sounded early in the Morning.—Swiss Guards, and relics of the Royal Party, repair to the Tuilleries.—Mandat assassinated.—Dejection of Louis, and energy of the Queen.—King's Ministers appear at the Bar of the Assembly, stating the peril of the Royal Family, and requesting a Deputation might be sent to the Palace.—Assembly pass to the Order of the Day.—Louis and his Family repair to the Assembly.—Conflict at the Tuilleries.—Swiss ordered to repair to the King's Person—and are many of them shot and dispersed on their way to the Assembly.—At the close of the Day almost all of them are massacred.—Royal Family spend the Night in the neighbouring Convent of the Feuillans.

THE King had, since the insurrection of the 20th of June, which displayed how much he was at the mercy of his enemies, renounced almost all thoughts of safety or escape. Henry IV. would have called for his arms—Louis XVI. demanded his confessor. "I have no longer any thing to do with earth," he said; "I must turn all my thoughts on Heaven." Some vain efforts were made to bribe the leaders of the Jacobins, who took the money, and pursued, as might have been expected, their own course with equal rigour. The motion for the declaration of the King's forfeiture still lingered in the Convention, its fate depending upon the coming crisis. At length the fatal 10th of August approached, being the day which, after repeated adjournments, had been fixed by the Girondists and their rivals for the final rising.

The King was apprised of their intention, and had hastily recalled from their barracks at Courbe-Voie about a thousand Swiss guards, upon whose fidelity he could depend. The formidable discipline and steady demeanour of these gallant mountaineers, might have recalled the description given by historians, of the entrance of their predecessors into Paris under similar circumstances, the day before the affair of the Barricades, in the reign of Henry II.* But the present moment was too anxious to admit of reflections upon past history.

Early on the morning of the 10th of August, the tocsin rung out its alarm peal over the terrified city of Paris, and announced that the long-menaced insurrection was at length on foot. In many parishes the Constitutional party resisted those who came to sound this awful signal; but the well-prepared Jacobins were found every where victorious, and the prolonged mournful sound was soon tolled out from every steeple in the metropolis.

To this melancholy music the contending parties arranged their forces for attack and defence, upon a day which was doomed to be decisive.

The Swiss guards got under arms, and repaired to their posts in and around the palace. About four hundred grenadiers of the loyal section of Filles Saint Thomas, joined by several from that of Les Petits Peres, in whom all confidence could justly be reposed, were posted in the interior of the palace, and associated with the Swiss for its defence. The relics of the Royalist party, undismayed at the events of the 28th of February in the year preceding,† had repaired to the palace on the first signal given by the tocsin. Joined to the domestic attendants of the royal family, they might amount to about four hundred persons. Nothing can more strongly mark the unprepared state of the court, than that

* Thus imitated by the dramatist Lee, from the historian Davila :

"Have you not heard—the King, preventing day,
Received the guards within the city gates;
The jolly Swissses marching to their pipes,
The crowd stood gaping heedless and amazed,
Shrunk to their shops, and left the passage free."

† When they were in similar circumstances maltreated by the National Guard. See page 98.

there were neither muskets nor bayonets for suitably arming these volunteers, nor any supply of ammunition, save what the Swiss and national grenadiers had in their pouches. The appearance also of this little troop tended to inspire dismay rather than confidence. The chivalrous cry of "Entrance for the Noblesse of France," was the signal for their filing into the presence of the royal family. Alas! instead of the thousand nobles whose swords used to gleam around their monarch at such a crisis, there entered but veteran officers of rank, whose strength, though not their spirit, was consumed by years, mixed with boys scarce beyond the age of children, and with men of civil professions, several of whom, Lamoignon Malesherbes for example, had now for the first time worn a sword. Their arms were as miscellaneous as their appearance. Rapiers, hangers, and pistols, were the weapons with which they were to encounter bands well provided with musketry and artillery. Their courage, however, was unabated. It was in vain that the Queen conjured, almost with tears, men aged fourscore and upwards, to retire from a contest where their strength could avail so little. The veterans felt that the fatal hour was come, and, unable to fight, claimed the privilege of dying in the discharge of their duty.

The behaviour of Marie Antoinette was magnanimous in the highest degree. "Her majestic air," says Peltier, "her Austrian lip, and aquiline nose, gave her an air of dignity, which can only be conceived by those who beheld her in that trying hour." Could she have inspired the King with some portion of her active spirit, he might even at that extreme hour have wrested the victory from the Revolutionists; but the misfortunes which he could endure like a saint, he could not face and combat like a hero; and his scruples about shedding human blood well nigh unmanned him.

The distant shouts of the enemy were already heard, while the Gardens of the Tuilleries were filled by the successive legions of the National Guard, with their cannon. Of this civic force, some, and especially the artillerymen, were as ill-disposed towards the King as was possible; others were well inclined to him; and the greater part remained doubtful. Mandat, their commander, was entirely in the royal interests. He had disposed the force he commanded to the best advantage for discouraging the mutinous, and giving confidence to the well-disposed, when he received an order to repair to the municipality for orders. He went thither accordingly, expecting the support of such Constitutionalists as remained in that magistracy, but he found it entirely in possession of the Jacobin party. Mandat was arrested, and ordered a prisoner to the Abbaye, which he never reached, being pistoled by an assassin at the gate of the Hotel de Ville. His death was an infinite loss to the King's party.

A signal advantage had at the same time been suffered to escape. Pethion, the Brissotin Mayor of Paris, was now observed among the National Guards. The Royalists possessed themselves of his person, and brought him to the palace, where it was proposed to detain this popular magistrate as an hostage. Upon this, his friends in the Assembly moved that he should be brought to the bar, to render an account of the state of the capital; a message was despatched accordingly requiring his attendance, and Louis had the weakness to permit him to depart.

The motions of the assailants were far from being so prompt and lively as upon former occasions, when no great resistance was anticipated. Santerre, an eminent brewer, who, from his great capital, and his affectation of popular zeal, had raised himself to the command of the suburb forces, was equally inactive in mind and body, and by no means fitted for the desperate part which he was called on to play. Westerman, a zealous Republican, and a soldier of skill and courage, came to press Santerre's march, informing him that the Marseillois and Breton Federates were in arms in the Place du Carousel, and expected the advance of the pikemen from the suburbs of Saint Antoine and St Marceau. On Santerre's hesitating, Westerman placed his sword-point at his throat, and

the citizen commandant, yielding to the nearer terror, put his hands at length in motion. Their numbers were immense. But the real strength of the assault was to lie on the Federates of Marseilles and Bretagne, and other provinces, who had been carefully provided with arms and ammunition. They were also secure of the Gens-d'armes, or soldiers of police, although these were called out and arranged on the King's side. The Marseillois and Bretons were placed at the head of the long columns of the suburb pikemen, as the edge of an axe is armed with steel, while the back is of coarser metal to give weight to the blow. The charge of the attack was committed to Westerman.

In the meantime, the defenders of the palace advised Louis to undertake a review of the troops assembled for his defence. His appearance and mien were deeply dejected, and he wore, instead of an uniform, a suit of violet, which is the mourning colour of sovereigns. His words were broken and interrupted, like the accents of a man in despair, and void of the energy suitable to the occasion. "I know not," he said, "what they would have from me—I am willing to die with my faithful servants—Yes, gentlemen, we will at length do our best to resist." It was in vain that the Queen laboured to inspire her husband with a tone more resolved—in vain that she even snatched a pistol from the belt of the Comte d'Artois, and thrust it into the King's hand, saying, "Now is the moment to show yourself as you are." Indeed, Barbaroux, whose testimony can scarce be doubted, declares his firm opinion, that had the King at this time mounted his horse, and placed himself at the head of the National Guards, they would have followed him, and succeeded in putting down the Revolution. History has its strong parallels, and one would think we are writing of Margaret of Anjou, endeavouring in vain to inspire determination into her virtuous but feeble-minded husband.

Within the palace, the disposition of the troops seemed excellent, and there, as well as in the courts of the Tuilleries, the King's address was answered with shouts of "*Vive le Roi!*" But when he sallied out into the garden, his reception from the legions of the National Guard was at least equivocal, and that of the artillerymen, and of a battalion from Saint Marceau, was decidedly unfavourable. Some cried, "*Vive la Nation!*" Some, "Down with the tyrant!" The King did nothing to encourage his own adherents, or to crush his enemies, but retired to hold counsel in the palace, around which the storm was fast gathering.

It might have been expected that the Assembly, in which the Constitutionals possessed so strong a majority as to throw out the accusation against La Fayette by a triumphant vote, might now, in the hour of dread necessity, have made some effort to save the crown which that Constitution recognized, and the innocent life of the prince by whom it was occupied. But fear had laid strong possession upon these unworthy and ungenerous representatives. The ministers of the King appeared at the bar, and represented the state of the city and of the palace, conjuring the Assembly to send a deputation to prevent bloodshed. This was courageous on the part of those faithful servants; for to intimate the least interest in the King's fate, was like the bold swimmer who approaches the whirlpool caused by the sinking of a gallant vessel. The measure they proposed had been resorted to on the 20th June preceding, and was then successful, even though the deputation consisted of members the most unfriendly to the King. But now, the Assembly passed to the order of the day, and thereby left the fate of the King and capital to chance, or the result of battle.

In the meantime, the palace was completely invested. The bridge adjacent to the Tuilleries, called the Pont Royal, was occupied by the insurgents, and the Quai on the opposite side of the river was mounted with cannon, of which the assailants had about fifty pieces, served by the most determined Jacobins; for the artillerymen had from the beginning embraced the popular cause with unusual energy.

At this decisive moment Roederer, the Procureur-general Syndic, the depository and organ of the law, who had already commanded the Swiss and armed Royalists not to make any offensive movement, but to defend themselves when attacked, began to think, apparently, that his own safety was compromised, by this implied grant of permission to use arms even in defence of the King's person. He became urgent with the King to retire from the palace, and put himself under the protection of the National Assembly. The Queen felt at once all the imbecility and dishonour of throwing themselves as suppliants on the protection of a body, which had not shown even a shadow of interest in their safety, surrounded as they knew the royal family to be with the most inveterate enemies. Ere she consented to such infamy, she said, she would willingly be nailed to the walls of the palace. But the counsel which promised to avert the necessity of bloodshed on either part, suited well with the timorous conscience and irresolution of Louis. Other measures were hastily proposed by those who had devoted themselves to secure his safety. There was, however, no real alternative but to fight at the head of his guards, or to submit himself to the pleasure of the Assembly, and Louis preferred the latter.

His wife, his sister, and his children, accompanied him on this occasion; and the utmost efforts of an escort of three hundred Swiss and national grenadiers were scarce able to protect them, and a small retinue, consisting of the ministers and a few men of rank, the gleanings of the most brilliant court of Christendom, who accompanied their master in this last act of humiliation, which was, indeed, equal to a voluntary descent from his throne. They were, at every moment of their progress, interrupted by the deadliest threats and imprecations, and the weapons of more than one ruffian were levelled against them. The Queen was robbed even of her watch and purse—so near might the worst criminals approach the persons of the royal fugitives. Louis showed the greatest composure amidst all these imminent dangers. He was feeble when called upon to kill, but strong in resolution when the question was only to die.

The King's entrance into the Assembly was not without dignity. "My family and I are come among you," he said; "to prevent the commission of a great crime." Vergniaud, who was president at the time, answered with propriety, though ambiguously. He assured the King that the Assembly knew its duties, and was ready to perish in support of them. A member of the Mountain observed, with bitter irony, that it was impossible for the Assembly to deliberate freely in presence of the monarch, and proposed he should retreat into one of the most remote committee rooms—a place where assassination must have been comparatively easy. The Assembly rejected this proposal, alike insulting and insidious, and assigned a box, or small apartment, called the *Logographe*, used for the reporters of the debates, for the place of refuge of this unhappy family. This arrangement was scarce made, ere a heavy discharge of musketry and cannon announced that the King's retreat had not prevented the bloodshed he so greatly feared.

It must be supposed to have been Louis's intention that his guards and defenders should draw off from the Palace, so soon as he himself had abandoned it, for to what purpose was it now to be defended, when the royal family were no longer concerned? and at what risk, when the garrison was diminished by three hundred of the best of the troops, selected as the royal escort? But no such order of retreat, or of non-resistance, had, in fact, been issued to the Swiss guards, and the military discipline of this fine corps prevented their retiring from an assigned post without command. Captain Duler is said to have asked the Mareschal Maily for orders, and to have received for answer, "Do not suffer your posts to be forced."—"You may rely on it," replied the intrepid Swiss.

Meantime, to give no unnecessary provocation as well as on account of their diminished numbers, the court in front of the palace was abandoned, and the guards were withdrawn into the building itself; their outermost sentinels being

placed at the bottom of the splendid staircase, to defend a sort of barricade which had been erected there, ever since the 20th June, to prevent such intrusions as distinguished that day.

The insurgents, with the Marseillois and Breton Federates at their heads, poured into the court-yard without opposition, planted their cannon where some small buildings gave them advantage, and advanced without hesitation to the outposts of the Swiss. They had already tasted blood that day, having massacred a patrol of royalists, who, unable to get into the Tuilleries, had attempted to assist the defence, by interrupting, or at least watching and discovering, the measures adopted by the insurgents. These men's heads were, as usual, borne on pikes among their ranks.

They pushed forward, and it is said the Swiss at first offered demonstrations of truce. But the assailants thronged onward, crowded on the barricade, and when the parties came into such close collision, a struggle ensued, and a shot was fired. It is doubtful from what side it came, nor is it of much consequence, for on such an occasion that body must be held the aggressors who approach the pickets of the other, armed and prepared for assault; and although the first gun be fired by those whose position is endangered, it is no less defensive than if discharged in reply to a fire from the other side.

This unhappy shot seems to have dispelled some small chance of a reconciliation between the parties. Hard firing instantly commenced from the Federates and Marseillois, whilst the palace blazed forth fire from every window, and killed a great many of the assailants. The Swiss, whose numbers were now only about seven hundred men, determined, notwithstanding, upon a sally, which, in the beginning, was completely successful. They drove the insurgents from the court-yard, killed many of the Marseillois and Bretons, took some of their guns, and turning them along the streets, compelled the assailants to actual flight, so that word was carried to the National Assembly that the Swiss were victorious. The utmost confusion prevailed there; the deputies upbraided each other with their share in bringing about the insurrection; Brissot showed timidity; and several of the deputies thinking the Guards were hastening to massacre them, attempted to escape by the windows of the Hall.

If, indeed, the sally of the Swiss had been supported by a sufficient body of faithful cavalry, the Revolution might have been that day ended. But the Gens-d'armes, the only horsemen in the field, were devoted to the popular cause, and the Swiss, too few to secure their advantage, were obliged to return to the palace, where they were of new invested.

Westerman posted his forces and artillery with much intelligence, and continued a fire on the Tuilleries from all points. It was now returned with less vivacity, for the ammunition of the defenders began to fail. At this moment D'Hervilly arrived from the Assembly, with the King's commands that the Swiss should cease firing, evacuate the palace, and repair to the King's person. The faithful Guards obeyed at once, not understanding that the object was submission, but conceiving they were summoned elsewhere, to fight under the King's eye. They had no sooner collected themselves into a body, and attempted to cross the Garden of the Tuilleries, than, exposed to a destructive fire on all sides, the remains of that noble regiment, so faithful to the trust assigned to it, diminished at every step; until, charged repeatedly by the treacherous Gens-d'armes, who ought to have supported them, they were separated into platoons, which continued to defend themselves with courage, even till the very last of them was overpowered, dispersed, and destroyed by multitudes. A better defence against such fearful odds scarce remains on historical record—a more useless one can hardly be imagined.

The rabble, with their leaders the Federates, now burst into the palace, executing the most barbarous vengeance on the few defenders who had not made their escape; and while some massacred the living, others, and especially the

unsexed women who were mingled in their ranks, committed the most shameful butchery on the corpses of the slain.

Almost every species of enormity was perpetrated upon that occasion excepting pillage, which the populace would not permit, even amid every other atrocity. There exist in the coarsest minds, nay, while such are engaged in most abominable wickedness, redeeming traits of character, which show that the image of the Deity is seldom totally and entirely defaced even in the rudest bosoms. An ordinary workman of the suburbs, in a dress which implied abject poverty, made his way into the place where the royal family were seated, demanding the King by the name of Monsieur Veto. "So you are here," he said, "beast of a Veto! There is a purse of gold I found in your house yonder. If you had found mine, you would not have been so honest." There were, doubtless, amongst that dreadful assemblage many thousands, whose natural honesty would have made them despise pillage, although the misrepresentations by which they were influenced to fury easily led them to rebellion and murder.

Band after band of these fierce men, their faces blackened with powder, their hands and weapons streaming with blood, came to invoke the vengeance of the Assembly on the head of the King and royal family, and expressed in the very presence of the victims whom they claimed, their expectations and commands how they should be dealt with.

Vergniaud, who, rather than Brissot, ought to have given name to the Girondists, took the lead in gratifying the wishes of these dreadful petitioners. He moved, 1st, That a National Convention should be summoned. 2d, That the King should be suspended from his office. 3d, That the King should reside at the Luxembourg palace under safeguard of the law,—a word which they were not ashamed to use. These proposals were unanimously assented to.

An almost vain attempt was made to save the lives of that remaining detachment of Swiss which had formed the King's escort to the Assembly, and to whom several of the scattered Royalists had again united themselves. Their officers proposed, as a last effort of despair, to make themselves masters of the Assembly, and declare the deputies hostages for the King's safety. Considering the smallness of their numbers, such an attempt could only have produced additional bloodshed, which would have been ascribed doubtless to the King's treachery. The King commanded them to resign their arms, being the last order which he issued to any military force. He was obeyed; but, as they were instantly attacked by the insurgents, few escaped slaughter, and submission preserved but a handful. About seven hundred and fifty fell in the defence, and after the storm of the Tuilleries. Some few were saved by the generous exertions of individual deputies—others were sent to prison, where a bloody end awaited them—the greater part were butchered by the rabble, so soon as they saw them without arms. The mob sought for them the whole night, and massacred many porters of private families, who, at Paris, are generally termed Swiss, though often natives of other countries.

The royal family were at length permitted to spend the night, which, it may be presumed, was sleepless, in the cells of the neighbouring convent of the Feuillans.

Thus ended, for the period of twenty years and upwards, the reign of the Bourbons over their ancient realm of France.

CHAPTER X.

La Fayette compelled to Escape from France—Is made Prisoner by the Prussians, with three Companions.—Reflections.—The Triumvirate, Danton, Robespierre, and Marat.—Revolutionary Tribunal appointed.—Stupor of the Legislative Assembly.—Longwy, Stenay, and Verdun, taken by the Prussians—Mob of Paris enraged.—Great Massacre of Prisoners in Paris, commencing on the 2d, and ending 6th September.—Apathy of the Assembly during and after these Events—Review of its Causes.

THE success of the 10th of August had sufficiently established the democratic maxim, that the will of the people, expressed by their insurrections, was the supreme law; the orators of the clubs its interpreters; and the pikes of the suburbs its executive power. The lives of individuals and their fortunes were from that time only to be regarded as leases at will, subject to be revoked so soon as an artful, envious, or grasping demagogue should be able to turn against the lawful owners the readily-excited suspicions of a giddy multitude, whom habit and impunity had rendered ferocious. The system established on these principles, and termed liberty, was in fact an absolute despotism, far worse than that of Algiers; because the tyrannic Dey only executes his oppression and cruelties within a certain sphere, affecting a limited number of his subjects who approach near to his throne; while, of the many thousand leaders of the Jacobins of France, every one had his peculiar circle in which he claimed right, as full as that of Robespierre or Marat, to avenge former slights or injuries, and to gratify his own individual appetite for plunder and blood.

All the departments of France, without exception, paid the most unreserved submission to the decrees of the Assembly, or rather to those which the Community of Paris, and the insurgents, had dictated to that legislative body; so that the hour seemed arrived when the magistracy of Paris, supported by a democratic force, should, in the name and through the influence of the Assembly, impose its own laws upon France.

La Fayette in vain endeavoured to animate his soldiers against this new species of despotism. The Jacobins had their friends and representatives in the very trustiest of his battalions. He made an effort, however, and a bold one. He seized on the persons of three deputies, sent to him as commissioners by the Assembly, to compel submission to their decrees, and proposed to reserve them as hostages for the King's safety. Several of his own general officers, the intrepid Dessaix amongst others, seemed willing to support him. Dumouriez, however, the personal enemy of La Fayette, and ambitious of being his successor in the supreme command, recognized the decrees of the Assembly in the separate army which he commanded. His example drew over Luckner, who also commanded an independent corps d'armée, and who at first seemed disposed to join with La Fayette.

That unfortunate General was at length left unsupported by any considerable part even of his own army; so that with three friends, whose names were well known in the Revolution, he was fain to attempt an escape from France, and, in crossing a part of the enemy's frontier, they were made prisoners by a party of Prussians.

Fugitives from their own camp for the sake of royalty, they might have expected refuge in that of the allied kings, who were in arms for the same object; but with a littleness of spirit which argued no good for their cause, the allies determined that these unfortunate gentlemen should be consigned as state prisoners to different fortresses. This conduct on the part of the monarchs, however irritated they might be by the recollection of some part of La Fayette's conduct in the outset of the Revolution, was neither to be vindicated by mo-

ality, the law of nations, nor the rules of sound policy. We are no approvers of the democratic species of monarchy which La Fayette endeavoured to establish, and cannot but be of opinion, that if he had acted upon his victory in the Champ de Mars, he might have shut up the Jacobin Club, and saved his own power and popularity from being juggled out of his hands by those sanguinary charlatans. But errors of judgment must be pardoned to men placed amidst unheard-of difficulties; and La Fayette's conduct on his visit to Paris, bore testimony to his real willingness to save the King and preserve the monarchy. But even if he had been amenable for a crime against his own country, we know not what right Austria or Prussia had to take cognizance of it. To them he was a mere prisoner of war, and nothing farther. Lastly, it is very seldom that a petty and vindictive line of policy can consist with the real interest, either of great princes or of private individuals. In the present case, the arrest of La Fayette was peculiarly the contrary. It afforded a plain proof to France and to all Europe, that the allied monarchs were determined to regard as enemies all who had in any manner, or to any extent, favoured the Revolution, being indeed the whole people of France, excepting the emigrants now in arms. The effect must necessarily have been, to compel every Frenchman, who was desirous of enjoying more liberty than the ancient despotism permitted, into submission to the existing government, whatever it was, so long as invading armies of foreigners, whose schemes were apparently as inconsistent with the welfare as with the independence of the country, were hanging on the frontiers of France.

For a short space, like hounds over the carcase of the prey they have jointly run down, the Girondists and Jacobins suspended their dissensions; but when the Constitutional party had ceased to show all signs of existence, their brawl soon recommenced, and the Girondists early discovered, that in the allies whom they had called on to assist them in the subjugation of royalty, they had already to strive with men, who, though inferior to them in speculative knowledge, and in the eloquence which was to sway the Assembly, possessed in a much higher degree the practical energies by which revolutions are accomplished, were in complete possession of the community (or magistracy) of Paris, and maintained despotic authority over all the bands of the metropolis. Three men of terror, whose names will long remain, we trust, unmatched in history by those of any similar miscreants, had now the unrivalled leading of the Jacobins, and were called the Triumvirate.

Danton deserves to be named first, as unrivalled by his colleagues in talent and audacity. He was a man of gigantic size, and possessed a voice of thunder. His countenance was that of an Ogre on the shoulders of a Hercules. He was as fond of the pleasures of vice as of the practice of cruelty; and it was said there were times when he became humanized amidst his debauchery, laughed at the terror which his furious declamations excited, and might be approached with safety, like the Maelstrom at the turn of tide. His profusion was indulged to an extent hazardous to his popularity, for the populace are jealous of a lavish expenditure, as raising their favourites too much above their own degree; and the charge of peculation finds always ready credit with them, when brought against public men.

Robespierre possessed this advantage over Danton, that he did not seem to seek for wealth, either for hoarding or expending, but lived in strict and economical retirement, to justify the name of the Incorruptible, with which he was honoured by his partisans. He appears to have possessed little talent, saving a deep fund of hypocrisy, considerable powers of sophistry, and a cold exaggerated strain of oratory, as foreign to good taste, as the measures he recommended were to ordinary humanity. It seemed wonderful, that even the seething and boiling of the revolutionary cauldron should have sent up from the bottom, and long supported on the surface, a thing so miserably void of claims

to public distinction; but Robespierre had to impose on the minds of the vulgar, and he knew how to beguile them, by accommodating his flattery to their passions and scale of understanding, and by acts of cunning and hypocrisy, which weigh more with the multitude than the words of eloquence, or the arguments of wisdom. The people listened as to their Cicero, when he twanged out his apostrophes of *Pauvre Peuple, Peuple vertueux!* and hastened to execute whatever came recommended by such honied phrases, though devised by the worst of men for the worst and most inhuman of purposes.

Vanity was Robespierre's ruling passion, and though his countenance was the image of his mind, he was vain even of his personal appearance, and never adopted the external habits of a *sans culotte*. Amongst his fellow Jacobins, he was distinguished by the nicety with which his hair was arranged and powdered; and the neatness of his dress was carefully attended to, so as to counterbalance, if possible, the vulgarity of his person. His apartments, though small, were elegant, and vanity had filled them with representations of the occupant. Robespierre's picture at length hung in one place, his miniature in another, his bust occupied a niche, and on the table were disposed a few medallions exhibiting his head in profile. The vanity which all this indicated was of the coldest and most selfish character, being such as considers neglect as insult, and receives homage merely as a tribute; so that, while praise is received without gratitude, it is withheld at the risk of mortal hate. Self-love of this dangerous character is closely allied with envy, and Robespierre was one of the most envious and vindictive men that ever lived. He never was known to pardon any opposition, affront, or even rivalry; and to be marked in his tablets on such an account was a sure, though perhaps not an immediate, sentence of death. Danton was a hero, compared with this cold, calculating, creeping miscreant; for his passions, though exaggerated, had at least some touch of humanity, and his brutal ferocity was supported by brutal courage. Robespierre was a coward, who signed death-warrants with a hand that shook, though his heart was relentless. He possessed no passions on which to charge his crimes; they were perpetrated in cold blood, and upon mature deliberation.

Marat, the third of this infernal triumvirate, had attracted the attention of the lower orders, by the violence of his sentiments in the journal which he conducted from the commencement of the Revolution, upon such principles that it took the lead in forwarding its successive changes. His political exhortations began and ended like the howl of a blood-hound for murder; or, if a wolf could have written a journal, the gaunt and famished wretch could not have ravined more eagerly for slaughter. It was blood which was Marat's constant demand, not in drops from the breast of an individual, not in puny streams from the slaughter of families, but blood in the profusion of an ocean. His usual calculation of the heads which he demanded amounted to two hundred and sixty thousand; and though he sometimes raised it as high as three hundred thousand, it never fell beneath the smaller number. It may be hoped, and, for the honour of human nature, we are inclined to believe, there was a touch of insanity in this unnatural strain of ferocity; and the wild and squalid features of the wretch appear to have intimated a degree of alienation of mind. Marat was, like Robespierre, a coward. Repeatedly denounced in the Assembly, he skulked instead of defending himself, and lay concealed in some obscure garret or cellar among his cut-throats, until a storm appeared, when, like a bird of ill omen, his death-screach was again heard. Such was the strange and fatal triumvirate, in which the same degree of cannibal cruelty existed under different aspects. Danton murdered to glut his rage; Robespierre, to avenge his injured vanity, or to remove a rival whom he envied; Marat, from the same instinctive love of blood, which induces a wolf to continue his ravage of the flocks long after his hunger is appeased.

These three men wore in complete possession of the Community of Paris,

which was filled with their adherents exclusively, and which, now in command of the armed force that had achieved the victory of the 10th of August, held the Assembly as absolutely under their control, as the Assembly, prior to that period, had held the person of the King. It is true, Pethion was still Mayor of Paris; but, being considered as a follower of Roland and Brissot, he was regarded by the Jacobins as a prisoner, and detained in a sort of honourable restraint, having a body of their most faithful adherents constantly around him, as a guard which they pretended was assigned for his defence and protection. The truth is, that Pethion, a vain man, and of very moderate talents, had already lost his consequence. His temporary popularity arose almost solely out of the enmity entertained against him by the court, and his having braved on one or two occasions the King's personal displeasure, particularly on the 20th of June. This merit was now forgotten, and Pethion was fast sinking into his natural nullity. Nothing could be more pitiful than the appearance of this magistrate, whose name had been so lately the theme of every tongue in Paris, when brought to the bar of the Assembly, pale, and hesitating to back, by his appearance among his terrible revolutionary associates, petitions for measures, as distasteful to himself as to his friends of the Gironde party, who had apparently no power to deliver him from his state of humiliating restraint.

The demands of the Community of Paris, now the Sanhedrim of the Jacobins, were of course for blood and vengeance, and revolutionary tribunals to make short and sharp execution upon constitutionalist and royalist, soldier and priest—upon all who acted on the principle, that the King had some right to defend his person and residence against a furious mob, armed with muskets and cannon—and upon all who could, by any possible implication, be charged with having approved such doctrines as leaned towards monarchy, at any time during all the changes of this changeful-featured Revolution.

A revolutionary tribunal was appointed accordingly; but the Girondists, to impose some check on its measures, rendered the judgment of a jury necessary for condemnation, an encumbrance which seemed to the Jacobins a needless and uncivic restriction of the rights of the people. Robespierre was to have been appointed President of this tribunal, but he declined the office on account of his philanthropic principles! Meantime, the sharpness of its proceedings was sufficiently assured by the nomination of Danton to the office of Minister of Justice, which had fallen to his lot as a Jacobin, while Roland, Servan, and Claviere, alike fearing and detesting their dreadful colleague, assumed, with Monge and Lebrun, the other offices, in what was now called a Provisionary Executive. These last five ministers were Girondists.

It was not the serious intention of the Assembly to replace Louis in a palace, or to suffer him to retain the smallest portion of personal freedom or political influence. It had, indeed, been decreed on the night of the 10th of August, that he should inhabit the Luxembourg palace, but, on the 11th, his residence was transferred, with that of the royal family, to an ancient fortress called the Temple, from the Knights Templars, to whom it once belonged. There was in front a house, with some more moderate apartments, but the dwelling of Louis was the donjon or ancient keep, itself a huge square tower of great antiquity, consisting of four stories. Each story contained two or three rooms or closets; but these apartments were unfurnished, and offered no convenience for the accommodation of an ordinary family, much less to prisoners of such distinction. The royal family were guarded with a strictness, of which every day increased the rigour.

In the meanwhile, the revolutionary tribunal was proceeding against the friends and partisans of the deposed monarch with no lack, one would have thought, of zeal or animosity. De la Porte, intendant of the King's civil list, D'Augremont, and Durosot, a royalist author, were with others condemned and executed. But Mortmorin, the brother of the royal minister, was acquitted;

and even the Comte d'Affray, though Colonel of the Swiss guards, found grace in the eyes of this tribunal;—so lenient it was in comparison to those which France was afterwards doomed to groan under. Danton, balked of his prey, or but half-supplied with victims, might be compared to the spectre-huntsman of Boccaccio,—

“Stern look'd the fiend, as frustrate of his will,
Not half suffic'd, and greedy yet to kill.”

But he had already devised within his soul, and agitated amongst his compeers, a scheme of vengeance so dark and dreadful, as never ruffian before or since had head to contrive, or nerve to execute. It was a measure of extermination which the Jacobins resolved upon—a measure so sweeping in its purpose and extent, that it should at once drown in their own blood every Royalist or Constitutionalist who could raise a finger, or even entertain a thought, against them.

Three things were indispensably essential to their execrable plan. In the first place, they had to collect and place within reach of their assassins, the numerous victims whom they sought to overwhelm with this common destruction. Secondly, it was necessary to intimidate the Assembly, and the Girondist party in particular; sensible that they were likely to interfere, if it was left in their power, to prevent acts of cruelty incompatible with the principles of most or all of their number. Lastly, the Jacobin chiefs were aware, that ere they could prepare the public mind to endure the massacres which they meditated, it was necessary they should wait for one of those critical moments of general alarm, in which fear makes the multitude cruel, and when the agitations of rage and terror combine to unsettle men's reason, and drown at once their humanity and their understanding.

To collect prisoners in any numbers was an easy matter, when the mere naming a man, however innocent, as an aristocrat or a suspected person, especially if he happened to have a name indicative of gentle blood, and an air of decency in apparel, was sufficient ground for sending him to prison. For the purpose of making such arrests upon suspicion, the Community of Paris openly took upon themselves the office of granting warrants for imprisoning individuals in great numbers, and at length proceeded so far in their violent and arbitrary conduct, as to excite the jealousy of the Legislative Body.

This Assembly of National Representatives seemed to have been stunned by the events of the 10th of August. Two-thirds of the deputies had a few days before exculpated La Fayette for the zeal with which he impeached the unsuccessful attempt of the 20th June, designed to accomplish the same purpose which had been effected on this last dread epoch of the Revolution. The same number, we must suppose, were inimical to the revolution achieved by the taking of the Tuilleries, and the dethronement of the monarch, whom it had been La Fayette's object to protect and defend, in dignity and person. But there was no energy left in that portion of the Assembly, though by far the largest, and the wisest. Their benches were left deserted, nor did any voice arise, either to sustain their own dignity, or, as a last resource, to advise a union with the Girondists, now the leading force in the Representative Body, for the purpose of putting a period to the rule of revolutionary terror over that of civil order. The Girondists themselves proposed no decisive measures, and indeed appear to have been the most helpless party, (though possessing in their ranks very considerable talent,) that ever attempted to act a great part in the convulsions of a state. They seem to have expected, that, so soon as they had accomplished the overthrow of the throne, their own supremacy should have been established in its room. They became, therefore, liable to the disappointment of a child, who, having built his house of boughs after his own fashion, is astonished to find those bigger and stronger than himself throw its materials out of their way, instead of attempting, according to his expectations, to creep into it, for the purpose of shelter.

Late and timidly, they at length began to remonstrate against the usurped power of the Community of Paris, who paid them as little regard, as they were themselves doing to the constituted authorities of the Executive Power.

The complaints which were laid before them of the violent encroachments made on the liberty of the people at large, the Girondists had hitherto answered by timid exhortations to the Community to be cautious in their proceedings. But on the 29th of August they were startled out of their weak inaction, by an assumption of open force, and open villainy, on the part of those formidable rivals, under which it was impossible to remain silent. On the night previous, the Community, proceeding to act upon their own sole authority, had sent their satellites, consisting of the municipal officers who were exclusively attached to them, (who were selected from the most determined Jacobins, and had been augmented to an extraordinary number,) to seize arms of every description, and to arrest suspicious persons in every corner of Paris. Hundreds and thousands of individuals had been, under these usurped powers, committed to the various prisons of the city, which were now filled even to choking, with all persons of every sex and age, against whom political hatred could allege suspicion, or private hatred revive an old quarrel, or love of plunder awake a thirst for confiscation.

The deeds of robbery, of license, and of ferocity, committed during these illegal proceedings, as well as the barefaced contempt which they indicated of the authority of the Assembly, awakened the Girondists, but too late, to some sense of the necessity of exertion. They summoned the municipality to their bar. They came, not to deprecate the displeasure of the Assembly, not to submit themselves to its mercy,—they came to triumph; and brought the speechless and trembling Pethion in their train, as their captive, rather than their mayor. Tallien explained the defence of the Community, which amounted to this: “The provisional representatives of the city of Paris,” he said, “had been calumniated; they appeared, to justify what they had done, not as accused persons, but as triumphing in having discharged their duty. The Sovereign People,” he said, “had committed to them full powers, saying, Go forth, save the country in our name—whatever you do we will ratify.” This language was, in effect, that of defiance, and it was supported by the shouts and howls of assembled multitudes, armed as for the attack on the Tuilleries, and their courage, it may be imagined, not the less, that there were neither aristocrats nor Swiss guards between them and the Legislative Assembly. Their cries were, “Long live our Community—our excellent commissioners—we will defend them or die!”

The satellites of the same party, in the tribunes or galleries, joined in the cry, with invectives on those members of the Assembly who were supposed, however republican in principles, to be opposed to the revolutionary measures of the Community. The mob without soon forced their way into the Hall,—joined with the mob within,—and left the theoretical republicans of the Assembly the choice of acquiescence in their dictates, flight, or the liberty of dying on their posts like the senators of that Rome which they admired. None embraced this last alternative. They broke up the meeting in confusion, and left the Jacobins secure of impunity in whatever they might next choose to attempt.

Thus, Danton and his fell associates achieved the second point necessary to the execution of the horrors which they meditated; the Legislative Assembly were completely subdued and intimidated. It remained to avail themselves of some opportunity which might excite the people of Paris, in their present feverish state, to participate in, or to endure crimes, at which in calm moments the rudest would probably have shuddered. The state of affairs on the frontier aided them with such an opportunity—aided them, we say, because every step of preparation beforehand, shows that the horrors acted on the 3d September

were premeditated; nay, the very trenches destined to inhumane hundreds and thousands of prisoners, yet alive, untried and undoomed, were already excavated.

A temporary success of the allied monarchs fell upon the mine already prepared, and gave fire to it, as lightning might have fired a powder magazine. Longwy, Stenay, and Verdun, were announced to have fallen into the hands of the King of Prussia. The first and last were barrier fortresses of reputed strength, and considerable resistance had been expected. The ardent and military spirit of the French was awakened in the resolute, upon learning that their frontier was thus invaded; fear and discomfiture took possession of others, who thought they already heard the allied trumpets at the gates of Paris. Between the eager desire of some to march against the army of the invaders, and the terror and dismay of others, there arose a climax of excitation and alarm, favourable to the execution of every desperate design; as ruffians ply their trade best, and with least chance of interruption, in the midst of an earthquake or a conflagration.

On the 2d September, the Community of Paris announced the fall of Longwy, and the approaching fate of Verdun, and, as if it had been the only constituted authority in the country, commanded the most summary measures for the general defence. All citizens were ordered to keep themselves in readiness to march on an instant's warning. All arms were to be given up to the Community, save those in the hands of active citizens, armed for the public protection. Suspected persons were to be disarmed, and other measures were announced, all of which were calculated to call men's attention to the safety of themselves and their families, and to destroy the interest which at ordinary times the public would have taken in the fate of others.

The awful voice of Danton astounded the Assembly with similar information, hardly deigning to ask their approbation of the measures which the Community of Paris had adopted on their own sole authority. "You will presently hear," he said, "the alarm-guns—falsely so called—for they are the signal of a charge. Courage—courage—and once again courage, is all that is necessary to conquer our enemies." These words, pronounced with the accent and attitude of an exterminating spirit, appalled and stupified the Assembly. We find nothing that indicated in them either interest in the imminent danger of the public from without, or in the usurpation from within. They appeared paralyzed with terror.

The armed bands of Paris marched in different quarters, to seize arms and horses, to discover and denounce suspected persons; the youth fit for arms were everywhere mustered, and amid shouts, remonstrances, and debates, the general attention was so engaged, each individual with his own affairs, in his own quarter, that, without interference of any kind, whether from legal authority, or general sympathy, an universal massacre of the numerous prisoners was perpetrated, with a quietness and deliberation, which has not its parallel in history. The reader, who may be still surprised that a transaction so horrid should have passed without opposition or interruption, must be again reminded of the astounding effects of the popular victory of the 10th of August; of the total quiescence of the Legislative Assembly; of the want of an armed force of any kind to oppose such outrages; and of the epidemic panic which renders multitudes powerless and passive as infants. Should these causes not appear to him sufficient, he must be contented to wonder at the facts we are to relate, as at one of those dreadful prodigies by which Providence confounds our reason, and shows what human nature can be brought to, when the restraints of morality and religion are cast aside.

The number of individuals accumulated in the various prisons of Paris, had increased by the arrests and domiciliary visits subsequent to the 10th of August, to about eight thousand persons. It was the object of this infernal scheme to destroy the greater part of these under one general system of murder, not to be executed by the sudden and furious impulse of an armed multitude, but with

a certain degree of cold blood and deliberate investigation. A force of armed banditti, Marseillois partly, and partly chosen ruffians of the Fauxbourgs, proceeded to the several prisons, into which they either forced their passage, or were admitted by the jailors, most of whom had been apprised of what was to take place, though some even of these steeled officials exerted themselves to save those under their charge. A revolutionary tribunal was formed from among the armed ruffians themselves, who examined the registers of the prison, and summoned the captives individually to undergo the form of a trial. If the judges, as was almost always the case, declared for death, their doom, to prevent the efforts of men in despair, was expressed in the words, "Give the prisoner freedom." The victim was then thrust out into the street, or yard; he was despatched by men and women, who, with sleeves tucked up, arms dyed elbow-deep in blood, hands holding axes, pikes, and sabres, were executioners of the sentence; and, by the manner in which they did their office on the living, and mangled the bodies of the dead, showed that they occupied their post as much from pleasure as from love of hire. They often exchanged places; the judges going out to take the executioners' duty, the executioners, with their reeking hands, sitting as judges in their turn. Maillard, a ruffian alleged to have distinguished himself at the siege of the Bastille, but better known by his exploits upon the march to Versailles,* presided during these brief and sanguinary investigations. His companions on the bench were persons of the same stamp. Yet there were occasions when they showed some transient gleams of humanity, and it is not unimportant to remark, that boldness had more influence on them than any appeal to mercy or compassion. An avowed Royalist was occasionally dismissed uninjured, while the Constitutionals were sure to be massacred. Another trait of a singular nature is, that two of the ruffians who were appointed to guard one of these intended victims home in safety, as a man acquitted, insisted upon seeing his meeting with his family, seemed to share in the transports of the moment, and on taking leave, shook the hand of their late prisoner, while their own were clotted with the gore of his friends, and had been just raised to shed his own. Few, indeed, and brief, were these symptoms of relenting. In general, the doom of the prisoner was death, and that doom was instantly accomplished.

In the meanwhile, the captives were penned up in their dungeons like cattle in a shambles, and in many instances might, from windows which looked outwards, mark the fate of their comrades, hear their cries, and behold their struggles, and learn from the horrible scene, how they might best meet their own approaching fate. They observed, according to Saint Meard, who, in his well named *Agony of Thirty-Six Hours*, has given the account of this fearful scene, that those who intercepted the blows of the executioners, by holding up their hands, suffered protracted torment, while those who offered no show of struggle were more easily despatched; and they encouraged each other to submit to their fate, in the manner least likely to prolong their sufferings.

Many ladies, especially those belonging to the court, were thus murdered. The Princess de Lamballe, whose only crime seems to have been her friendship for Marie Antoinette, was literally hewn to pieces, and her head, and that of others, paraded on pikes through the metropolis. It was carried to the Temple on that accursed weapon, the features yet beautiful in death, and the long fair curls of the hair floating around the spear. The murderers insisted that the King and Queen should be compelled to come to the window to view this dreadful trophy. The municipal officers who were upon duty over the royal prisoners, had difficulty, not merely in saving them from this horrible inhumanity, but also in preventing the prison from being forced. Three-coloured ribbons were extended across the street, and this frail barrier was found sufficient to

intimate that the Temple was under the safeguard of the nation. We do not read that the efficiency of the three-coloured ribbons was tried for the protection of any of the other prisons. No doubt the executioners had their instructions where and when they should be respected.

The Clergy, who had declined the Constitutional oath from pious scruples, were, during the massacre, the peculiar objects of insult and cruelty, and their conduct was such as corresponded with their religious and conscientious professions. They were seen confessing themselves to each other, or receiving the confessions of their lay companions in misfortune, and encouraging them to undergo the evil hour, with as much calmness as if they themselves had not been to share its bitterness. As Protestants, we cannot abstractedly approve of the doctrines which render the established clergy of one country dependant upon a Sovereign Pontiff, the prince of an alien state. But these priests did not make the laws for which they suffered; they only obeyed them; and as men and Christians we must regard them as martyrs, who preferred death to what they considered as apostasy.

In the brief intervals of this dreadful butchery, which lasted for four days, the judges and executioners ate, drank, and slept; and awoke from slumber, or rose from their meal, with fresh appetite for murder. There were places arranged for the male, and for the female murderers, for the work had been incomplete without the intervention of the latter. Prison after prison was invested, entered, and under the same form of proceeding, made the scene of the same inhuman butchery. The Jacobins had reckoned on making the massacre universal over France. But the example was not generally followed. It required, as in the case of Saint Bartholomew, the only massacre which can be compared to this in atrocity, the excitation of a large capital, in a violent crisis, to render such horrors possible.

The Community of Paris were not in fault for this. They did all they could to extend the sphere of murder. Their warrant brought from Orleans near sixty persons, including the Duke de Cossé-Brissac, De Lessart the late minister, and other Royalists of distinction, who were to have been tried before the High Court of that Department. A band of assassins met them, by appointment of the Community, at Versailles, who, uniting with their escort, murdered almost the whole of these unhappy men.

From the 2d to the 6th of September, these infernal crimes proceeded uninterrupted, protracted by the actors for the sake of the daily pay of a louis to each, openly distributed amongst them, by order of the Commune.* It was either from a desire to continue as long as possible a labour so well requited, or because these beings had acquired an insatiable lust of murder, that, when the jails were emptied of state criminals, the assassins attacked the Bicêtre, a prison where ordinary delinquents were confined. These unhappy wretches offered a degree of resistance, which cost the assailants more dear than any they had experienced from their proper victims. They were obliged to fire on them with cannon, and many hundreds of the miserable creatures were in this way exterminated, by wretches worse than themselves.

No exact account was ever-made of the number of persons murdered during this dreadful period; but not above two or three hundred of the prisoners arrested for state offences were known to escape, or be discharged, and the most moderate computation raises the number of those who fell to two or three thousand, though some carry it to twice the extent. Truchod announced to the Legislative Assembly, that four thousand had perished. Some exertion was made to save the lives of persons imprisoned for debt, whose numbers, with those of common felons, may make up the balance betwixt the number slain,

* The books of the Hotel de Ville preserve evidence of this fact. Billaud de Varennes appeared publicly among the assassins, and distributed the price of blood.

and eight thousand who were prisoners when the massacre began. The bodies were interred in heaps, in immense trenches, prepared beforehand by order of the Community of Paris; but their bones have since been transferred to the subterranean catacombs, which form the general charnel-house of the city. In those melancholy regions, while other relics of mortality lie exposed all around, the remains of those who perished in the massacres of September are alone secluded from the eye. The vault in which they repose is closed with a screen of freestone, as if relating to crimes unfit to be thought of even in the proper abode of death, and which France would willingly hide in oblivion.

In the meanwhile the reader may be desirous to know what efforts were made by the Assembly, to save the lives of so many Frenchmen, or to put a stop to a massacre carried on in contempt of all legal interference, and by no more formidable force than that of two or three hundred atrocious felons, often, indeed, diminished to only fifty or sixty. He might reasonably expect that the National Representatives would have thundered forth some of those decrees which they formerly directed against the Crown, and the Noblesse; that they should have repaired by deputations to the various sections, called out the National Guards, and appealed to all, not only that were susceptible of honour or humanity, but to all who had the breath and being of man, to support them in interrupting a series of horrors disgraceful to mankind. Such an appeal to the feelings of their fellow-citizens made them at last successful in the overthrow of Robespierre. But the reign of Terror was now but in its commencement, and men had not yet learned that there lay a refuge in the efforts of Despair.

Instead of such energy as might have been expected from the principles of which they boasted, nothing could be more timid than the conduct of the Girondists, being the only party in the Assembly who had the power, and might be supposed to have the inclination, to control the course of crime.

We looked carefully through the *Moniteurs*, which contain the official account of the sittings of the Assembly on these dreadful days. We find regular entries of many patriotic gifts, of such importance as the following:—A fusée from an Englishman—a pair of hackney-coach horses from the coachman—a map of the country around Paris from a lady. While engaged in receiving and registering these civic donations, their journal bears few and doubtful references to the massacres then in progress. The Assembly issued no decree against the slaughter—demanded no support from the public force, and restricted themselves to sending to the murderers a pitiful deputation of twelve of their number, whose commission seems to have been limited to petition for the safety of one of their colleagues, belonging to the Constitutional faction. With difficulty they saved him, and the celebrated Abbé Sicard, the philanthropic instructor of the deaf and dumb, imprisoned as a non-juring priest, for whom the wails and tears of his hapless pupils had procured a reprieve even from the assassins. Dussault, one of that deputation, distinguished himself by the efforts which he used to persuade the murderers to desist. “Return to your place,” said one of the ruffians, his arms crimsoned with blood. “You have made us lose too much time. Return to your own business, and leave us to ours.”

Dussault went back, to recount to those who had sent him what he had witnessed, and how he had been received; and concluded with the exclamation, “Woe’s me, that I should have lived to see such horrors, without the power of stopping them!” The Assembly heard the detail, and remained timid and silent as before.

Where, in that hour, were the men who formed their judgment upon the models presented by Plutarch, their feelings on the wild eloquence of Rousseau? Where were the Girondists, celebrated by one of their admirers,* as distinguished by good morals, by severe probity, by a profound respect for the dignity.

of man, by a deep sense of his rights and his duties, by a sound, constant, and immutable love of order, of justice, and of liberty? Were the eyes of such men blind, that they could not see the blood which flooded for four days the streets of the metropolis? were their ears deadened, that they could not hear the shouts of the murderers, and the screams of the victims? or were their voices mute, that they called not upon God and man—upon the very stones of Paris, to assist them in interrupting such a crime? Political reasons have, by Royalist writers, been supposed to furnish a motive for their acquiescence; for there is, according to civilians, a certain degree of careless or timid imbecility, which can only be explained as having its origin in fraud. They allege that the Girondists saw, rather with pleasure than horror, the atrocities which were committed, while their enemies the Jacobins, exterminating their equally hated enemies the Constitutionalists and Royalists, took on themselves the whole odium of a glut of blood, which must soon, they might naturally expect, disgust the sense and feelings of a country so civilized as France. We remain, nevertheless, convinced, that Vergniaud, Brissot, Roland, and, to a certainty, his high-minded wife, would have stopped the massacres of September, had their courage and practical skill in public affairs borne any proportion to the conceit which led them to suppose, that their vocation lay for governing such a nation as France.

But whatever was the motive of their apathy, the Legislative Assembly was nearly silent on the subject of the massacres, not only while they were in progress, but for several days afterwards. On the 16th of September, when news from the army on the frontiers was beginning to announce successes, and when the panic of the metropolis began to subside, Vergniaud adroitly charged the Jacobins with turning on unhappy prisoners of state the popular resentment, which should have animated them with bravery to march out against the common enemy. He upbraided also the Community of Paris with the assumption of unconstitutional powers, and the inhuman tyranny with which they had abused them; but his speech made little impression, so much are deeds of cruelty apt to become familiar to men's feelings, when of frequent recurrence. When the first accounts were read in the Constituent Assembly, of the massacres perpetrated at Avignon, the President fainted away, and the whole body manifested a horror, as well of the senses as of the mind; and now, that a far more cruel, more enduring, more extensive train of murders was perpetrated under their own eye, the Legislative Assembly looked on in apathy. The utmost which the eloquence of Vergniaud could extract from them was a decree, that in future the Community should be answerable with their own lives for the security of the prisoners under their charge. After passing this decree, the Legislative Assembly, being the second Representative Body of the French nation, dissolved itself according to the resolutions of the 10th of August, to give place to the National Convention.

The Legislative Assembly was, in its composition and its character, of a caste greatly inferior to that which it succeeded. The flower of the talents of France had naturally centered in the National Assembly, and, by an absurd regulation, its members were incapacitated from being re-elected; which necessarily occasioned their situation being in many instances supplied by persons of inferior attainments. Then the destinies of the first Assembly had been fulfilled in a more lofty manner. They were often wrong, often absurd, often arrogant and presumptuous, but never mean or servile. They respected the liberty of debate, and even amidst the bitterest political discussions, defended the persons of their colleagues, however much opposed to them in sentiment, and maintained their constitutional inviolability. They had also the great advantage of being, as it were, free born. They were indeed placed in captivity by their removal to Paris, but their courage was not abated; nor did they make any concessions of a personal kind to the ruffians, by whom they were at times personally ill-used.

But the second, or Legislative Assembly, had, on the contrary, been captive

from the moment of their first convocation. They had never met but in Paris, and were inured to the habit of patient submission to the tribunes and the refuse of the city, who repeatedly broke into their Hall, and issued their mandates in the form of petitions. On two memorable occasions they showed too distinctly, that considerations of personal safety could overpower their sense of public duty. Two-thirds of the representatives joined in acquitting La Fayette, and declared by doing so that they abhorred the insurrection of the 20th of June; yet, when that of the 10th of August had completed what was before attempted in vain upon the occasion preceding, the Assembly unanimously voted the deposition of the monarch, and committed him to prison. Secondly, they remained silent and inactive during all the horrors of September, and suffered the executive power to be wrenched out of their hands by the Community of Paris, and used before their eyes for the destruction of many thousands of Frenchmen whom they represented.

It must be, however, remembered, that the Legislative Assembly were oppressed by difficulties and dangers the most dreadful that can threaten a government;—the bloody discord of contending factions, the arms of foreigners menacing the frontier, and civil war breaking out in the provinces. In addition to these sources of peril and dismay, there were three divided parties within the Assembly itself; while a rival power, equally formidable from its audacity and its crimes, had erected itself in predominating authority, like that of the Maires du Palais over the feeble monarchs of the Merovingian dynasty.

CHAPTER XI.

Election of Representatives for the National Convention.—Jacobins are very active.—Right hand Party—Left hand side—Neutral Members.—The Girondists are in possession of the ostensible Power—They denounce the Jacobin Chiefs, but in an irregular and feeble manner.—Marat, Robespierre, and Danton, supported by the Community and Populace of Paris.—France declared a Republic.—Duke of Brunswick's Campaign—Neglects the French Emigrants—Is tardy in his Operations—Occupies the poorest part of Champagne.—His Army becomes Sickly.—Prospects of a Battle.—Dumouriez's Army recruited with Carmagnoles.—The Duke resolves to Retreat—Thoughts on the consequences of that Measure—The Retreat disastrous.—The Emigrants disbanded in a great measure.—Reflections on their Fate.—The Prince of Condé's Army.

It was of course the object of each party to obtain the greatest possible majority in the National Convention now to be assembled, for arranging upon some new footing the government of France, and for replacing that Constitution to which faith had been so repeatedly sworn.

The Jacobins made the most energetic exertions. They not only wrote missives through their two thousand affiliated societies, but sent three hundred commissaries, or delegates, to superintend the elections in the different towns and departments; to exhort their comrades not only to be firm, but to be enterprising; and to seize with strong hand the same power over the public force, which the mother society possessed in Paris. The advice was poured into willing ears; for it implied the sacred right of insurrection, with the concomitant privileges of pillage and slaughter.

The power of the Jacobins was irresistible in Paris, where Robespierre, Danton, and Marat, who shared the high places in their synagogue, were elected by an immense majority; and of the twenty deputies who represented Paris, there were not above five or six unconnected with the massacres. Nor

were they anywhere unsuccessful, where there existed enough of their adherents to overawe by threats, clamour, and violence, the impartial voice of the public.

But in every state there is a great number of men who love order for itself, and for the protection it affords to property. There were also a great many persons at heart Royalists, either pure or constitutional, and all these united in sending to the National Convention deputies, who, if no opportunity occurred of restoring the monarchy, might at least co-operate with the Girondists and more moderate Republicans in saving the life of the unfortunate Louis, and in protecting men's lives, and property in general, from the infuriate violence of the Jacobins. These supporters of order—we know no better name to assign to them—were chiefly representatives of the departments, where electors had more time to discriminate and reflect, than when under the influence of the revolutionary societies and clubs of the towns. Yet Nantes, Bourdeaux, Marseilles, Lyons, and other towns, chiefly in the west and south, were disposed to support the Girondists, and sent deputies favourable to their sentiments. Thus the Convention, when assembled, still presented the appearance of two strong parties; and the feebleness of that, which, being moderate in its views, only sought to act defensively, consisted not in want of numbers, but in want of energy.

It was no good omen, that on taking their places in the Assembly, these last assumed the Right Side; a position which seemed doomed to defeat, since it had been successively occupied by the suppressed parties of moderate Royalists and Constitutionalists. There was defeat in the very sound of the *parti droit*, whereas the left-hand position had always been that of victory. Men's minds are moved by small incidents in dubious times. Even this choice of seats made an impression upon spectators and auditors unfavourable to the Girondists, as all naturally shrink from a union with bad fortune. There was a considerable party of neutral members, who, without joining themselves to the Girondists, affected to judge impartially betwixt the contending parties. They were chiefly men of consciences too timid to go all the lengths of the Jacobins, but also of too timid nerves to oppose them openly and boldly. These were sure to succumb on all occasions, when the Jacobins judged it necessary to use their favourite argument of popular terror.

The Girondists took possession, however, of all ostensible marks of power. Danton was dismissed from his place as Minister of Justice; and they were, as far as mere official name and title could bestow it on them, in possession of the authority of government. But the ill-fated regulation which excluded ministers from seats in the Assembly, and consequently from any right save that of defence, proved as fatal to those of the new system, as it had done to the executive government of Louis.

Our remarks upon the policy of the great change from monarchy to a republic, will be more in place elsewhere. Indeed, violent as the change sounded in words, there was not such an important alteration in effect as to produce much sensation. The Constitution of 1791 was a democracy to all intents and purposes, leaving little power with the King, and that little subject to be so much cramped and straitened in its operation, that the royal authority was even smaller in practice than it had been limited in theory. When to this is added, that Louis was a prisoner amongst his subjects, acting under the most severe restraint, and endangering his life every time he attempted to execute his constitutional power, he must long have been held rather an incumbrance on the motions and councils of the state, than as one of its efficient constituted authorities. The nominal change of the system of government scarcely made a greater alteration in the internal condition of France, than the change of a sign makes upon a house of entertainment, where the business of the tavern is carried

on in the usual way, although the place is no longer distinguished as the King's Head.

While France was thus alarmed and agitated within, by change, by crime, by the most bitter political factions, the dawn of that course of victory had already risen on the frontiers, which, in its noon-day splendour, was to blaze fiercely over all Europe. It is not our purpose to detail military events at present; we shall have but too many of them to discuss hereafter. We shall barely state, that the Duke of Brunswick's campaign, considered as relative to his proclamation, forms too good an illustration of the holy text, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." The Duke was at the head of a splendid army, which had been joined by fifteen thousand emigrants in the finest state of equipment, burning with zeal to rescue the King, and avenge themselves on those by whom they had been driven from their country. From what fatality it is hard to conceive, but the Duke of Brunswick seems to have looked with a certain degree of coldness and suspicion on those troops, whose chivalrous valour and high birth called them to the van, instead of the rear, in which the Generalissimo was pleased to detain them. The chance of success that might justly have been expected from the fiery energy which was the very soul of French chivalry, from the fear which such an army might have inspired, or perhaps from the friends whom they might have found, was altogether lost. There was something in this extraordinary conduct, which almost vindicated the suspicion that Prussia was warring on her own account, and was not disposed to owe too much of the expected success to the valour of the emigrants. And it escaped not the remark, both of the emigrants and the French at large, that Longwy and Verdun were ostentatiously taken possession of by the allies, not under the name of the King of France, or the Comte d'Artois, but in that of the Emperor; which appeared to give colour to the invidious report, that the allies were to be indemnified for the cost of their assistance at the expense of the French line of frontier towns. Neither did the Duke use his fine army of Prussians, or direct the motions of the Austrians under Clairfait, to any greater advantage. He had, indeed, the troops of the Great Frederick; but under the command of an irresolute and incapable leader, it was the sword of Scanderbeg in the hands of a boy.

This tardiness of the Duke of Brunswick's movements intimated a latent doubt of his own capacity to conduct the campaign. The superiority of his veteran and finely disciplined forces over the disorganized army of Dumouriez, reinforced as it was by crowds of Federates, who were perfect strangers to war, would have been best displayed by bold and rapid movements, evincing at once activity and combination, and alarming raw troops by a sense of danger, not in front alone, but on every point. Each day which these new soldiers spent unfought, was one step towards military discipline, and what is more, towards military confidence. The general who had threatened so hard, seemed to suspend his blow in indecision; and he remained trifling on the frontiers, "when Frederick, had he been in our front," said the French general, "would long since have driven us back upon Chalons."

The result of so many false steps began soon to appear. Brunswick, whose army was deficient in battering guns, though entering France on a frontier of fortifications, was arrested by the obstinate defence of Thionville. Having at length decided to advance, he spent nine days in marching thirty leagues, but omitted to possess himself of the defiles of Argonnes, by which alone the army of Luckner could co-operate with that of Dumouriez. The allied general now found himself in the most elevated part of the province of Champagne, branded for its poverty and sterility with the unseemly name *La Champagne Pouilleuse*, where he found difficulty to subsist his army. Meantime, if corn and forage were scarce, grapes and melons were, unfortunately, plenty. These last fruits

are so proverbially unwholesome, that the magistrates of Liege, and some other towns, forbid the peasants to bring them to market under pain of confiscation. It was the first time such delicacies had been presented to the hyperborean appetites of the Prussians; and they could not resist the temptation, though the same penalty was annexed to the banquet, as to that which produced the first transgression. They ate and died. A fatal dysentery broke out in the camp, which swept the soldiers away by hundreds in a day, sunk the spirits of the survivors, and seems to have totally broken the courage of their commander.

Two courses remained to the embarrassed general. One was, to make his way by giving battle to the French, by attacking them in the strong position which they had been permitted to occupy, notwithstanding the ease with which they might have been anticipated. It is true, Dumouriez had been very strongly reinforced. France, from all her departments, had readily poured forth many thousands of her fiery youth, from city and town, village and grange and farm, to protect the frontiers, at once, from the invasion of foreigners, and the occupation of thousands of vengeful emigrants. They were undisciplined, indeed, but full of zeal and courage, heated and excited by the scenes of the republic, and inflamed by the florid eloquence, the songs, dances, and signal-words with which it had been celebrated. Above all, they were of a country, which, of all others in Europe, has been most familiar with war, and the youth of which are most easily rendered amenable to military discipline.

But to these new levies the Duke of Brunswick might have safely opposed the ardent valour of the emigrants, men descended of families whose deeds of chivalry fill the registers of Europe; men by whom the road to Paris was regarded as that which was to conduct them to victory, to honour, to the rescue of their King, to reunion with their families, to the recovery of their patrimony; men accustomed to consider disgrace as more dreadful by far than death, and who claimed as their birth-right, military renown and the use of arms. In one skirmish, fifteen hundred of the emigrant cavalry had defeated, with great slaughter, a column of the Carmagnoles, as the republican levies were called. They were routed with great slaughter, and their opponents had the pleasure to count among the slain a considerable number of the assassins of September.

But the French general had more confidence in the Carmagnole levies, from which his military genius derived a valuable support, than Brunswick thought proper to repose in the chivalrous gallantry of the French noblesse. He could only be brought to engage in one action, of artillery, near Valmy, which was attended with no marked consequence, and then issued his order for a retreat. It was in vain that the Comte d'Artois, with a spirit worthy of the line from which he was descended, and the throne to which he has now succeeded, entreated, almost implored, a recall of this fatal order; in vain that he offered in person to head the emigrant forces, and to assume with them the most desperate post in the battle, if the Generalissimo would permit it to be fought. But the Duke, obstinate in his desponding in proportion to his former presumption, was not of that high mind which adopts hazardous counsels in desperate cases. He saw his army mouldering away around him, beheld the French forming in his rear, knew that the resources of Prussia were unequal to a prolonged war, and, after one or two feeble attempts to negotiate for the safety of the captive Louis, he was at length contented to accept an implied permission to retreat without molestation. He raised his camp on the 30th of September, and left behind him abundant marks of the dreadful state to which his army was reduced.

When we look back on these events, and are aware of Dumouriez's real opinions, and the interest which he took in the fate of the King, we have little reason to doubt, that the Duke of Brunswick might, by active and prompt measures, have eluded that general's defensive measures; nay, that judicious negotiation might have induced him, on certain points being conceded, to have united a part at

least of his forces with those of the emigrants in a march to Paris, for the King's rescue, and the punishment of the Jacobins.

But had the restoration of Louis XVI. taken place by the armed hand of the emigrants and the allies, the final event of the war must still have been distant. Almost the whole body of the kingdom was diametrically opposed to the restoration of the absolute monarchy with all its evils; and yet it must have been the object of the emigrants, in case of success, again to establish, not only royalty in its utmost prerogative, but all the oppressive privileges and feudal subjections which the Revolution had swept away. Much was to have been dreaded, too, from the avidity of the strangers, whose arms had assisted the imprisoned Louis, and much more from what has since been aptly termed the Reaction, which must have taken place upon a counter-revolution. It was greatly to be apprehended, that the emigrants, always deeming too lightly of the ranks beneath them, incensed by the murder of their friends, and stung by their own private wrongs and insults, would, if successful, have treated the Revolution not as an exertion of the public will of France to free the country from public grievances, but as a *Jacquerie*, (which in some of its scenes it too much resembled,) a domestic treason of the vassals against their liege lords. It was the will of Providence, that the experience of twenty years and upwards should make manifest, that in the hour of victory itself concessions to the defeated, as far as justice demands them, is the only mode of deriving permanent and secure peace.

The retreat of the Prussians was executed in the worst possible order, as is usually the case of such a manœuvre when unprovided for, and executed by troops who had been led to expect a very different movement. But if to them it was a measure of disaster and disgrace, it was to the unfortunate emigrants who had joined their standard, the signal of utter despair and ruin. These corps were composed of gentlemen, who, called suddenly and unprovided from their families and homes, had only brought with them such moderate sums of money as could be raised in an emergency, which they had fondly conceived would be of very brief duration. They had expended most of their funds in providing themselves with horses, arms, and equipments—some part must have been laid out in their necessary subsistence, for they served chiefly at their own expense—and perhaps, as might have been expected among high-spirited and high-born youths, their slender funds had not been managed with an economical view of the possibility of the reverses which had taken place. In the confusion and disorder of the retreat, their baggage was plundered by their auxiliaries, that is to say, by the disorderly Prussian soldiers, who had shaken loose all discipline; and they were in most cases reduced for instant maintenance to sell their horses at such paltry prices as they could obtain. To end the history of such of this devoted army as had been engaged in the Duke of Brunswick's campaign, they were disbanded at Juliers, in November 1792.

The blindness of the sovereigns, who, still continuing a war on France, suffered such fine troops to be dissolved for want of the means of support, was inexcusable; their cold and hard-hearted conduct towards a body of gentlemen, who, if politically wrong, were at least devoted to the cause for which Austria asserted that she continued in arms, was equally unwise and ungenerous. These gallant gentlemen might have upbraided the Kings who had encouraged, and especially the general who led, this ill-fated expedition, in the words of Shakespeare, if he had been known to them,—

“Hast thou not spoke like thunder on our side,
Been sworn our soldier—bidding us depend
Upon thy stars, thy fortune, and thy strength?”

But the reproaches of those who have no remedy but the exposition of their wrongs, seldom reach the ears of the powerful by whom these wrongs have been committed.

It is not difficult to conceive the agony with which these banished gentlemen abandoned all hopes of saving the life of their King, and the recovery of their rank and fortune. All their proud vaunts of expected success were lost, or converted into serpents to sting them. They had no hope before them, and, what is worst to men of high spirit, they had fallen with scarce a blow struck for honour, far less for victory. They were now doomed, such as could, to exercise for mere subsistence the prosecution of sciences and arts, which they had cultivated to adorn prosperity—to wander in foreign lands, and live upon the precarious charity of foreign powers, embittered everywhere by the reflections of some, who pitied the folly that could forfeit rank and property for a mere point of honour; and of others, who saw in them the enemies of rational liberty, and upbraided them with the charge, that their misfortunes were the necessary consequence of their arbitrary principles.

It might have in some degree mitigated their calamity, could some gifted sage have shown them, at such distance as the Legislator of Israel beheld the Promised Land from Mount Pisgah, the final restoration of the royal house, in whose cause they had suffered shipwreck of their all. But how many perished in the wilderness of misfortune which intervened—how few survived the twenty years wandering which conducted to this promised point! and of those few, who, war-worn and wearied by misfortunes, survived the restoration of royalty, how very few were rewarded by more than the disinterested triumph which they felt on that joyful occasion! and how many might use the simile of a royalist, of Britain on a similar occasion,—“The fleece of Gideon remained dry, while the hoped-for restoration shed showers of blessing on all France beside!”

The emigrant regiments, under the command of the Prince of Condé, had another and nobler fate. They retained their arms, and signalized themselves by their exertions; were consumed by the sword, and in toils of service, and died at least the death of soldiers, mourned, and not unrevenged. But they were wasting their devoted courage in the service of foreigners; and if their gallantry was gratified by the defeat of those whom they regarded as the murderers of their King and as usurpers of their rights, they might indeed feel that their revenge was satiated, but scarce in any sense could they regard their victories as serviceable to the cause to which they had sacrificed their country, their possessions, their hopes, their lives. Their fate, though on a much more extensive scale, much resembles that of the officers of the Scottish army in 1690, who, following the fortunes of James II. to France, were at length compelled to form themselves into a battalion of privates, and, after doing many feats of gallantry in the service of the country where they found refuge, at length melted away under the sword of the enemy, and the privations of military service. History, while she is called upon to censure or commend the actions of mankind according to the rules of immutable justice, is no less bound to lament the brave and generous, who, preferring the dictates of honourable feeling to those of prudence, are hurried into courses which may be doubtful in policy, and perhaps in patriotism, but to which they are urged by the disinterested wish of discharging what they account a conscientious duty. The emigrants were impolitic, perhaps, in leaving France, though that conduct had many apologies; and their entrance into their country in arms to bring back the despotic system, which Louis XVI. and the whole nation, save themselves, had renounced, was an enterprise unwisely and unjustly undertaken. But the cause they embraced was one dear to all the prejudices of the rank and sentiments in which they had been brought up; their loyal purpose in its defence is indisputable; and it would be hard to condemn them for following one extreme, when the most violent and tyrannical proceedings were, in the sight of all Europe, urging another, so bloody, black, and fatal as that of the faction which now domineered in Paris, and constrained men, whose prejudices of birth or education were in favour of freedom, to loathe the very name of France, and of the Revolution.

The tame and dishonourable retreat of the Duke of Brunswick and his Prussians, naturally elated the courage of a proud and martial people. Recruits flowed into the Republican ranks from every department; and the generals, Custine on the Rhine, and Montesquiou on the side of Savoy, with Dumouriez in the Netherlands, knew how to avail themselves of these reinforcements, which enabled them to assume the offensive on all parts of the extensive south-eastern frontier of France.

The attack of Savoy, whose sovereign, the King of Sardinia, was brother-in-law of the Comte d'Artois, and had naturally been active in the cause of the Bourbons, was successfully commenced, and carried on by General Montesquiou already mentioned, a French noble, and an aristocrat of course by birth, and as it was believed by principle, but to whom, nevertheless, the want of experienced leaders had compelled the ruling party at Paris to commit the command of an army. He served them well, possessed himself of Nice and Chamberi, and threatened even Italy.

On the centre of the same line of frontier, Custine, an excellent soldier and a fierce republican, took Spire, Oppenheim, Worms, finally the strong city of Mentz, and spread dismay through that portion of the Germanic empire. Adopting the republican language of the day, he thundered forth personal vengeance, denounced in the most broad and insulting terms, against such princes of the Germanic body as had distinguished themselves by zeal against the Revolution; and what was equally formidable, he preached to their subjects the flattering and exciting doctrines of the Republicans, and invited them to join in the sacred league of the oppressed people against princes and magistrates, who had so long held over them an usurped power.

But the successes of Dumouriez were of a more decided and more grateful character to the ruling men in the Convention. He had a heavier task than either Custine or Montesquiou; but his lively and fertile imagination had already devised modes of conquest with the imperfect means he possessed. The difference between commanders is the same as between mechanics. A workman of commonplace talents, however expert custom and habit may have made him in the use of his ordinary tools, is at a loss when deprived of those which he is accustomed to work with. The man of invention and genius finds out resources, and contrives to make such implements as the moment supplies answer his purpose, as well, and perhaps better, than a regular chest of working utensils. The ideas of the ordinary man are like a deep-rutted road, through which his imagination moves slowly, and without departing from the track; those of the man of genius are like an avenue, clear, open, and smooth, on which he may traverse as occasion requires.

Dumouriez was a man of genius, resource, and invention; Clairfait, who was opposed to him, a brave and excellent soldier, but who had no idea of strategy or tactics, save those current during the Seven Years War. The former knew so well how to employ the fire and eagerness of his Carmagnoles, of whose blood he was by no means chary, and how to prevent the consequences of their want of discipline, by reserves of his most steady and experienced troops, that he gave Clairfait a signal defeat at Jemappes, on the 6th November 1792.

It was then that both Austria and Europe had reason to regret the absurd policy of Joseph II., both in indisposing the inhabitants towards his government, and, in the fine provinces of the Austrian Netherlands, dismantling the iron girdle of fortified towns, with which the wisdom of Europe had invested that frontier. Clairfait, who, though defeated, was too good a disciplinarian to be routed, had to retreat on a country unfriendly to the Austrians, from recollection of their own recent insurrection, and divested of all garrison towns; which must have been severe checks, particularly at this period, to the incursion of a revolutionary army, more fitted to win battles by its impetuosity, than to overcome obstacles which could only be removed by long and patient sieges.

As matters stood, the battle of Jemappes was won, and the Austrian Netherlands were fully conquered without further combat by the French general. We shall leave him in his triumph, and return to the fatal scenes acting in Paris.

CHAPTER XII.

Jacobins determine upon the Execution of Louis.—Progress and Reasons of the King's Unpopularity.—Girondists taken by surprise, by a proposal for the Abolition of Royalty made by the Jacobins.—Proposal carried.—Thoughts on the New System of Government—Compared with that of Rome, Greece, America, and other Republican States.—Enthusiasm throughout France at the Change—Follies it gave birth to—And Crimes.—Monuments of Art destroyed.—Madame Roland interposes to save the Life of the King.—Barrere.—Girondists move for a Departmental Legion—Carried—Revoked—and Girondists defeated.—The Authority of the Community of Paris paramount even over the Convention.—Documents of the Iron-Chest.—Parallel betwixt Charles I. and Louis XVI.—Motion by Pethion, that the King should be Tried before the Convention.

It is generally to be remarked, that Crime, as well as Religion, has her sacramental associations, fitted for the purposes to which she desires to pledge her votaries. When Catiline imposed an oath on his fellow-conspirators, a slave was murdered, and his blood mingled with the beverage in which they pledged each other to their treason against the republic. The most desperate mutineers and pirates too have believed, that by engaging their associates in some crime of a deep and atrocious nature, so contrary to the ordinary feelings of humanity as to strike with horror all who should hear of it, they made their allegiance more completely their own; and, as remorse is useless where retreat is impossible, that they thus rendered them in future the desperate and unscrupulous tools, necessary for the desperate designs of their leaders.

In like manner, the Jacobins,—who had now full possession of the passions and confidence of the lower orders in France, as well as of all those spirits among the higher classes, who, whether desirous of promotion by exertions in the revolutionary path, or whether enthusiasts whose imagination had become heated with the extravagant doctrines that had been current during these feverish times,—the Jacobins resolved to engage their adherents, and all whom they influenced, in proceeding to the death of the unfortunate Louis. They had no reason to doubt that they might excite the populace to desire and demand that final sacrifice, and to consider the moment of its being offered as a time of jubilee. Nor were the better classes likely to take a warm or decisive interest in the fate of their unhappy prince, so long the object of unpopularity.

From the beginning of the Revolution, down to the total overthrow of the throne, first the power of the King, and afterwards his person and the measures to which he resorted, were the constant subject of attack by the parties who successively forced themselves into his administration. Each faction accused the other during the time of their brief sway, of attempts to extend the power and the privileges of the Crown; which was thus under a perpetual siege, though carried on by distinct and opposite factions, one of whom regularly occupied the lines of attack, to dislodge the others, as fast as they obtained successively possession of the ministry. Thus the Third Estate overcame the two privileged classes, in behalf of the people and against the Crown; La Fayette and the Constitutionals triumphed over the Moderates, who desired to afford the King the shelter and bulwark of an intermediate Senate; and then,

after creating a Constitution as democratical as it could be, leaving a name and semblance of Royalty, they sunk under the Girondists, who were disposed altogether to dispense with that symbol. In this way it appeared to the people that the King was their natural enemy, and that the royal interest was directly opposed to a revolution which had brought them sundry advantages, besides giving them the feelings and consequence of freemen. In this manner, one of the mildest and best-disposed monarchs that ever swayed a sceptre, became exposed to general suspicion and misconstruction in his measures, and (as is sure speedily to follow) to personal contempt, and even hatred. Whatever the King did in compliance with the current tide of Revolution, was accounted as fraudulent complaisance, designed to blind the nation. Whatever opposition he made to that powerful impulse, was accounted an act of open treason against the sovereignty of the people.

His position, with regard to the invading powers, was enough of itself to load him with obloquy and suspicion. It is true, that he was called, and professed himself, the willing King of a popular, or democratic monarchy; but in the proclamations of his allies, he was described as a monarch imprisoned, degraded, and almost dethroned. To achieve his liberty (as they affirmed,) and to re-establish his rights, the Emperor his brother-in-law, the King of Prussia his ally, and above all, his brothers, the Princes of the Blood of France, were in arms, and had sent numerous armies to the frontiers. It was scarcely possible, in the utmost extent of candour, that the French people should give Louis credit for desiring the success of the revolutionary cause, by which not only his power had been circumscribed, but his person had been placed under virtual restraint, against forces armed avowedly for his safety and liberty, as well as the restoration of his power. We can allow as much to the disinterestedness of Louis, as to any whose feelings and rights were immediately concerned with the point at issue; and we admit that all concessions which he made to the popular cause, before the National Assembly had asserted a paramount authority over his, were willingly and freely granted. But after the march from Versailles, he must have been an enthusiast for public liberty of a very uncommon character, if we could suppose him seriously wishing the defeat of his brothers and allies, and the victory of those who had deprived him first of authority, and then of freedom.

A single glance at his situation must have convinced the people of France, that Louis could scarcely be sincere in desiring the continuance of the system to which he had given his adhesion as sovereign; and the consciousness that they could not expect confidence where they themselves had made ungenerous use of their power, added force to their suspicions, and acrimony to the deep resentments which arose out of them. The people had identified themselves and their dearest interests (right or wrong, it signifies little to the result) with the Revolution, and with the increasing freedom which it bestowed, or rather promised to bestow, in every succeeding change. The King, who had been the regular opponent of every one of these innovations, was in consequence regarded as the natural enemy of the country, who, if he continued to remain at the helm of the executive government, did so with the sole view of running the vessel upon the rocks.

If there were any men in France generous enough to give the King credit for complete good faith with the Constitutionals, his flight from Paris, and the manifestos which he left behind him, protesting against the measures in which he had acquiesced, as extorted from him by constraint, gave open proof of Louis's real feelings. It is true, the King denied any purpose of leaving the kingdom, or throwing himself into the hands of the foreign powers; but it could escape no one, that such a step, however little it was calculated upon in the commencement of his flight, might very easily have become inevitable before its completion. It does not appear from the behaviour of the escorts

of dragoons and hussars, that there was any attachment among the troops to the King's person; and had the mutiny of Bouillé's forces against that general's authority taken place after the King reached the camp, the only safety of Louis must have been in a retreat into the Austrian territory. This chance was so evident, that Bouillé himself had provided for it, by requesting that the Austrian forces might be so disposed as to afford the King protection should the emergency occur. Whatever, therefore, might be the King's first experiment, the point to which he directed his flight bore out those, who supposed and asserted that it must have ultimately terminated in his re-union with his brothers; and that such a conclusion must have repeatedly occurred to the King's thoughts.

But if the King was doubted and suspected before he gave this decisive proof of his disinclination to the Constitution, there had surely happened nothing in the course of his being seized at Varennes, or the circumstances of his reception at Paris, tending to reconcile him to the Constitutional Crown, which was a second time proffered him, and which he again, with all its duties and acts of self-denial, solemnly accepted.

We have before hinted, that the King's assuming of now the frail and barren sceptre, proffered to him under the most humiliating circumstances, was a piece of indifferent policy. There occurred almost no course of conduct by which, subjected as he was to general suspicion, he could show himself once more to his people in a clear and impartial point of view—each of his measures was sure to be the theme of the most malignant commentary. If his conduct assumed a popular aspect, it was accounted an act of princely hypocrisy; if it was like his opposition to the departmental army, it would have been held as intended to weaken the defence of the country; if it resembled his rejection of the decrees against the emigrants and refractory priests, then it might be urged as inferring a direct intention of bringing back the old despotic system.

In short, all confidence was lost between the sovereign and the people, from a concurrence of unhappy circumstances, in which it would certainly be unjust to cast the blame exclusively on either party, since there existed so many grounds for distrust and misunderstanding on both sides. The noble and generous confidence which Frenchmen had been wont to repose in the personal character of their monarch, (that confidence, which the probity of no man could deserve more than that of Louis,) was withered, root and branch; or those in whose breasts it still flourished were banished men, and had carried the *Oriflamme*, and the ancient spirit of French chivalry, into a camp not her own. The rest of the nation, a scattered and intimidated remnant of Royalists excepted, were Constitutionals, who, friends rather to the crown than to the King as an individual, wished to preserve the form of government, but without either zeal or attachment to Louis; or Girondists, who detested his office as Republicans; or Jacobins, who hated his person. Every one, therefore, assailed Louis; and it was held enrolling himself amongst aristocrats, the most avowed and hated enemies of the new order of things, if any one lifted a voice in his defence, or even apology.

To this the influence of the revolutionary clubs, amounting to so many thousands, and of the daily press, almost the only kind of literature which France had left, added the full tribute of calumny and inculpation. The Jacobins attacked the person of the King from the very commencement of the Revolution; for they desired that Louis should be dethroned, even when some amongst them were leagued for placing Orleans in his room. The Girondists, on the contrary, would have been well contented to spare the person of Louis; but they urged argument after argument in the journal which they directed, against the royal office. But upon the whole, the King, whether in his royal or personal character, had been so long and uniformly calumniated and misinterpreted, that through most parts of France he was esteemed the enemy whom the people had most to dread, and whom they were most interested to get rid of. In

evidence of which it may be added, that during all successive changes of parties, for the next year or two, the charge of a disposition towards royalty was always made an aggravation of the accusations which the parties brought against each other, and was considered as so necessary an ingredient of the charge, that it was not omitted even when circumstances rendered it impossible.

Both parties in the Convention were thus prepared to acquire popularity, by gratifying the almost universal prejudices against monarchy, and against the King. The Girondists, constant to the Republican principles they entertained, had resolved to abolish the throne; but their audacious rivals were prepared to go a step beyond them, by gratifying the popular spirit of vengeance which their own calumnies had increased to such a pitch, by taking the life of the de-throned monarch. This was the great national crime which was to serve France for a republican baptism, and which, once committed, was to be regarded as an act of definitive and deadly adhesion to the cause of the Revolution. But not contented with taking measures for the death of the monarch, this desperate but active faction resolved to anticipate their rivals in the proposal for the abolition of royalty.

The Girondists, who counted much on the popularity which they were to attain by this favourite measure, were so far from fearing the anticipation of the Jacobins, that, under the idea of Orleans having some interest remaining with Danton and others, they rather expected some opposition on their part. But what was their surprise and mortification when* Manuel arose, and demanded that the first proposal submitted to the Convention should be the abolition of royalty! Ere the Girondists could recover from their surprise, Collot d'Herbois, a sorry comedian, who had been hissed from the stage, desired the motion to be instantly put to the vote. The Girondists, anticipated in their scheme, had no resource left but to be clamorous in applauding the motion, lest their hesitation had brought their republican zeal into question. Thus all they could do was but to save their credit with the popular party, at a time when they expected to increase it to such a height. Their antagonists had been so alert as to steal the game out of their hands.

The violence with which the various orators expressed themselves against monarchy of every complexion, and kings in general, was such as to show, either that they were in no state of mind composed enough to decide on a great national measure, or that the horrors of the massacres, scarce ten days remote, impressed on them the danger of being lukewarm in the cause of the sovereign people, who were not only judges without resort, but the prompt executioners of their own decrees.

The Abbé Gregoire declared, that the dynasties of kings were a race of devouring animals, who fed on the blood of the people; and that kings were in the moral order of things what monsters are in the physical—that courts were the arsenals of crimes, and the centre of corruption—and that the history of princes was the martyrology of the people. Finally, that all the members of the Convention, being fully sensible of these self-evident truths, it was needless to delay even for a moment the vote of abolition, reserving it to more leisure to put their declaration into better form. Ducos exclaimed, that the crimes of Louis alone formed a sufficient reason for the abolition of monarchy. The motion was received and passed unanimously; and each side of the Hall, anxious to manifest their share in this great measure, echoed back to the other the new war-cry of *Vive la Republique!* Thus fell, at the voice of a wretched player and cut-throat, backed by that of a renegade priest, the most ancient and most distinguished monarchy of Europe. A few remarks may be permitted upon the new government, the adoption of which had been welcomed with so much gratulation.

It has been said, that the government which is best administered is best.

* 21st September 1792.

This maxim is true for the time, but for the time only; as good administration depends often on the life of individuals, or other circumstances in themselves mutable. One would rather incline to say, that the government is best calculated to produce the happiness of a nation, which is best adapted to the existing state of the country which it governs, and possesses at the same time such internal means of regeneration as may enable it to keep pace with the changes of circumstances, and accommodate itself to the unavoidable alterations which must occur in a progressive state of society. In this point of view, and even in the patriarchal circle, the most natural form of government, in the early periods of society, are Monarchy, or a Republic. The father is head of his own family, the assembled council of the fathers governs the republic; or the *patria potestas* of the whole state is bestowed upon some successful warrior or eminent legislator, who becomes king of the tribe. But a republic, in the literal acceptation, which supposes all the individuals subject to its government to be consulted in council upon all affairs of the public, cannot survive the most early period of existence. It is only to be found around the council-fire of a North American tribe of Indians; and even there, the old men forming a sort of senate, have already established a sort of aristocracy. As society advances, and the little state extends itself, ordinary matters of government are confided to delegates, or exclusively grasped by some of the higher orders of the state. Rome, when she dismissed the Tarquins, the period to which the Girondists were fond of assimilating that of the French Revolution, had already its privileged body of patricians, its senate, from which were exclusively chosen the consuls; until at a later period, and at the expense of many feuds with the patricians, the plebeians succeeded in obtaining for their order many advantages. But the state of Rome was not more republican, in the proper sense, than before these concessions. The corporate citizens of Rome were indeed admitted into some of the privileges of the nobles; but the quantity of territory and of population over which these citizens extended their dominion, was so great, that the rural and unrepresented part of the inhabitants quite outnumbered that of the citizens who voted in the Comitia, and constituted the source of authority. There was the whole body of slaves, who neither were nor could be represented, being considered by the law as no farther capable of political or legal rights, than a herd of so many cattle; and there were the numerous and extensive dominions, over which, under the name of auxiliaries, Rome exercised a right of absolute sovereignty. In fact, the so called democracy was rather an oligarchy, dispersed more widely than usual, and vesting the government of an immense empire in a certain limited number of the inhabitants of Rome called citizens, bearing a very small proportion in bulk to the gross number of the inhabitants. These privileged persons in some degree lived upon their votes;—the ambitious caressed them, fed them, caught their eyes with magnificent exhibitions, and their ears with extravagant eloquence, and by corrupting their principles, at last united the small class of privileged citizens themselves, under the very bondage in which they had long kept their extensive empire. There is no one period of the Roman republic, in which it can be said, considering the number of the persons governed relatively to those who had as citizens a share of that government by vote, or capacity of bearing office, that the people, as a whole, were fairly and fully represented.

All other republics of which we have any distinct account, including the celebrated states of Greece, were of so small a size, that it was by no means difficult to consult the citizens to a considerable extent in the affairs of the state. Still this right of being consulted was retained among the free citizens of Greece. Slaves, who amounted to a very large proportion of the inhabitants, were never permitted any interference there, more than in Rome. Now, as it was by slaves that the coarser, more debasing, and more sordid parts of the labour of the community were performed, there were thus excluded from

the privilege of citizens almost all those, who, by constant toil, and by the sordid character of the employments to which their fate condemned them, might be supposed incapable of exercising political rights with due feelings of reflection and of independence. It is not too much to say, in conclusion, that excepting in the earliest stage of human society, there never existed a community, in which was to be found that liberty and equality, which the French claimed for each individual in the whole extent of their empire.

Not only the difficulty or impossibility of assigning to every person in France an equal portion of political power, was one against which antiquity had never attempted to struggle, but the wealth and size of the late French empire were circumstances which experience induced wise statesmen to conclude against the favourable issue of the experiment. These memorable republics, which Montesquieu compliments with being formed upon *virtue*, as the leading principle, inhabited the modest and sequestered habitations where virtue is most often found. In mountainous countries like those of the Swiss, where the inhabitants are nearly of the same rank, and not very much disproportioned in substance, and where they inhabit a small district or territory, a republic seems the most natural form of government. Nature has to a certain extent established an equality among the fathers of such a society, and there is no reason why policy should supplant it. In their public meetings, they come together upon the same general footing, and possess nearly the same opportunity of forming a judgment; and the affairs of such a state are too simple, and too little complicated, to require frequent or prolonged discussions. The same applies to small states, like Geneva, and some of the Dutch provinces, where the inequality of wealth, if it exists in some instances, is qualified by the consideration, that it is gained in the same honourable pursuit of mercantile traffic, where all fortunes are founded on the same commercial system, and where the chance that has made one man rich yesterday, may to-morrow depress him and raise another. Under such favourable circumstances, republics may exist long and happily, providing they can prevent luxury from working the secret dissolution of their moral principles, or the exterior force of more powerful neighbours from swallowing up their little community in the rage of conquest.

America must certainly be accounted a successful attempt to establish a republic on a much larger scale than those we have mentioned. But that great and flourishing empire consists, it must be remembered, of a federative union of many states, which, though extensive in territory, are comparatively thin in occupants. There do not exist in America, in the same degree, those circumstances of a dense and degraded population, which occasion in the old nations of Europe such an infinite difference of knowledge and ignorance, of wealth the most exuberant, and indigence the most horrible. No man in America need be poor, if he has a hatchet and arms to use it. The wilderness is to him the same retreat which the world afforded to our first parents. His family, if he has one, is wealth; if he is unencumbered with wife or children, he is the more easily provided for. A man who wishes to make a large fortune, may be disappointed in America; but he who seeks, with a moderate degree of industry, but the wants which nature demands, is certain to find them. An immense proportion of the population of the United States consists of agriculturists, who live upon their own property, which is generally of moderate extent, and cultivate it by their own labour. Such a situation is peculiarly favourable to republican habits. The man who feels himself really independent,—and so must each American who can use a spade or an axe,—will please himself with the mere exertion of his free-will, and form a strong contrast to the hollowing, bawling, blustering rabble of a city, where a dram of liquor, or the money to buy a meal, is sure to purchase the acclamation of thousands, whose situation in the scale of society is too low to permit their thinking of their political right as a thing more valuable than to be bartered against the degree of advantage they may

procure, or of license which they may exercise, by placing it at the disposal of one candidate or another.

Above all, before considering the case of America as parallel with that of France, the statesmen of the latter country should have observed one great and radical difference. In America, after the great change in their system had been effected by shaking off the sovereignty of the mother country, the States arranged their new government so as to make the least possible alteration in the habits of their people. They left to future and more convenient opportunity, what farther innovations this great change might render necessary; being more desirous to fix the general outlines of a firm and orderly government, although containing some anomalies, than to cast all existing authorities loose, in order that they might produce a constitution more regular in theory, but far less likely to be put into effectual execution, than those old forms under which the people had grown up, and to which they were accustomed to render regular obedience. They abolished no nobility, for they had none in the Colonies to abolish; but in fixing the basis of their constitution, they balanced the force and impulse of the representative body of the States by a Senate, designed to serve the purposes answered by the House of Lords in the British Constitution. The governors of the different States also, in whose power the executive government of each was reposed, continued to exercise the same duties as before, without much other change, than that they were named by their fellow-citizens, instead of being appointed by the sovereign of the mother country. The Congress exercised the rights which success had given them over the loyalists, with as much temperance as could be expected after the rage of a civil war. Above all, the mass of the American population was in a sound healthy state, and well fitted to bear their share in the exercise of political rights. They were independent, as we have noticed, and had comparatively few instances amongst them of great wealth, contrasted with the most degrading indigence. They were deeply imbued with a sense of religion, and the morality which is its fruit. They had been brought up under a free government, and in the exercise of the rights of freemen; and their fancies were not liable to be excited, or their understandings made giddy, with a sudden elevation to privileges, the nature of which was unknown to them. The republic of America, moreover, did not consist of one huge and populous country, with an overgrown capital, where the Legislative Body, cooped up in its precincts like prisoners, were liable to be acted upon by the applauses or threats of a desperate rabble. Each state of America carries on its own immediate government, and enjoys unmolested the privilege of adopting such plans as are best suited to their own peculiar situation, without embarrassing themselves with that ideal uniformity, that universal equality of rights, which it was the vain object of the French Constituent Assembly to establish. The Americans know that the advantage of a constitution, like that of a garment, consists, neither in the peculiarity of the fashion, nor in the fineness of the texture, but in its being well adapted to the person who receives protection from it. In short, the sagacity of Washington was not more apparent in his military exploits, than in the manly and wise pause which he made in the march of revolution, so soon as peace gave an opportunity to interrupt its impulse. To replace law and social order upon an established basis, was as much the object of this great general, as it seems to have been that of the statesmen of Paris, civilians as they were, to protract a period of insurrection, murder, and revolutionary tyranny.

To such peculiarities and advantages as those we have above stated, France opposed a direct contrast. Not only was the exorbitant influence of such a capital as Paris a bar to the existence of that republican virtue which is the essence of a popular form of government, but there was nothing like fixed or settled principles in the minds of the people of France at large. Everything had, within the last few years, been studiously and industriously altered, from

the most solemn rites of the Church of Rome, to the most trifling article of dress; from the sacrament of the mass to the fashion of a shoe-tie. Religion was entirely out of the question, and the very slightest vestiges of an established church were about to be demolished. Republican virtue (with the exception of that of the soldiers, whose valour did honour to the name) consisted in wearing a coarse dress and foul linen, swearing the most vulgar oaths, obeying without scruple the most villainous mandates of the Jacobin Club, and assuming the title, manner, and sentiments of a real sans-culotte. The country was besides divided into an infinite variety of factions, and threatened with the plague of civil war. The streets of the metropolis had been lately the scene of a desperate conflict, and yet more recently of a horrible massacre. On the frontiers, the country was pressed by armies of invaders. It was a crisis in which the Romans, with all their love of freedom, would have called in the assistance of a Dictator; yet it was then, when, without regarding either the real wants of the country, or the temper of its inhabitants, France was erected into a Republic, a species of government the most inconsistent with energetic, secret, and successful councils.

These considerations could not have escaped the Girondists. Neither could they be blind to the fact, that each republic, whatever its pretensions to freedom, has committed to some high officer of the state, under the name of Doge, Stadtholder, President, or other title, the custody of the executive power; from the obvious and undeniable principle, that, with safety to freedom, it cannot be lodged in the hands of the Legislative Body. But knowing this to be the case, they dared not even hint that such a separation of powers was indispensable, aware that their fierce enemies, the Jacobins, while they would have seized on the office without scruple, would, with the other hand, sign an accusation of leze-nation against them for proposing it. Thus crude, raw, and ill-considered, did one of the most important changes that could be wrought upon a country, pass as hastily through this Legislative Body as the change of a decoration in the theatre.

The alteration was, notwithstanding, hailed by the community at large, as the consummation of the high fortunes to which France was called. True, half Europe was in arms at her gates—but the nation who opposed their swords to them were become republicans. True, the most frightful disorder had stalked abroad, in the shape of armed slaughter—it was but the effervescence and delirium of a republican consciousness of freedom. Peculation had crept into the finance, and theft had fingered the diamonds of the state—but the name of a republic was of itself sufficient to restore to the blackest Jacobin of the gang, the moral virtues of a Cincinnatus. The mere word *Republic* was now the universal medicine for all evils which France could complain of, and its regenerating operations were looked for with as much faith and confidence, as if the salutary effects of the convocation of the Estates of the Kingdom, once worshipped as a panacea with similar expectations, had not deceived the hopes of the country.

Meantime, the actors in the new drama began to play the part of Romans with the most ludicrous solemnity. The name of citizen was now the universal salutation to all classes; even when a deputy spoke to a shoe-black, that fond symbol of equality was regularly exchanged betwixt them; and, in the ordinary intercourse of society, there was the most ludicrous affectation of Republican brevity and simplicity. "When you conquer Brussels," said Collot d'Herbois, the actor, to General Dumouriez, "my wife, who is in that city, has my permission to reward you with a kiss." The general was ungallant enough not to profit by this flattering permission. His quick wit caught the ridicule of such an ejaculation as that which Camus addressed to him: "Citizen General," said the deputy, "thou dost meditate the part of Cæsar; but remember I will be Brutus, and plunge a poniard in your bosom."—"My dear Camus," said

the lively soldier, who had been in worse dangers than were involved in this classical threat, "I am no more like Cæsar than you are like Brutus; and an assurance that I should live till you kill me, would be equal to a brevet of immortality."

With a similar assumption of republican dignity, men graced their children, baptized or unbaptized, with the formidable names of Roman heroes, and the folly of Anacharsis Klotz seemed to become general throughout the nation.

Republican virtues were of course adopted or affected. The duty of mothers nursing their own children, so eloquently insisted on by Rousseau, and nevertheless so difficult to practise under the forms of modern life, was generally adopted in Paris; and as the ladies had no idea that this process of parental attention was to interfere with the usual round of entertainment, mothers, with their infants dressed in the most approved Roman costume, were to be seen at the theatre, with the little disastrous victims of republican affectation, whose wailings, as well as other embarrassments occasioned by their presence, formed sometimes disagreeable interruptions to the amusements of the evening, and placed the inexperienced matrons in an awkward situation.

These were follies to be laughed at. But when men read Livy, for the sake of discovering what degree of private crime might be committed under the mask of public virtue, the affair became more serious. The deed of the younger Brutus served any man as an apology to betray to ruin and to death a friend, or a patron, whose patriotism might not be of the pitch which suited the time. Under the example of the elder Brutus, the nearest ties of blood were repeatedly made to give way before the ferocity of party zeal—a zeal too often assumed for the most infamous and selfish purposes. As some fanatics of yore studied the Old Testament for the purpose of finding examples of bad actions to vindicate those which themselves were tempted to commit, so the republicans of France, we mean the desperate and outrageous bigots of the Revolution, read history, to justify, by classical instances, their public and private crimes. Informers, those scourges of a state, were encouraged to a degree scarce known in ancient Rome in the time of the Emperors, though Tacitus has hurled his thunders against them, as the poison and pest of his time. The duty of lodging such informations was unblushingly urged as indispensable. The safety of the Republic being the supreme charge of every citizen, he was on no account to hesitate in *denouncing*, as it was termed, any one whomsoever, or howsoever connected with him,—the friend of his counsels, or the wife of his bosom,—providing he had reason to suspect the devoted individual of the crime of *incivism*,—a crime the more mysteriously dreadful, that no one knew exactly its nature.

The virtue, even of comparatively good men, gave way under the temptations held out by these fearful innovations on the state of morals. The Girondists themselves did not scruple to avail themselves of the villainy of others, when what they called the cause of the country, in reality that of their own faction, could be essentially served by it; but it was reserved for the Jacobins to carry to the most hideous extremity the principle which made an exclusive idol of patriotism, and demanded that every other virtue, as well as the most tender and honourable dictates of feeling and conscience, should be offered up at the shrine of the Republic, as children were of old made to pass through the fire to Moloch.

Another eruption of republican zeal was directed against the antiquities, and fine arts of France. The name of King being pronounced detestable, all the remembrances of royalty were to be destroyed. This task was committed to the rabble; and although a work dishonourable to their employers, and highly detrimental both to history and the fine arts, it was nevertheless infinitely more harmless than those in which the same agents had been lately employed. The royal sepulchres at Saint Denis, near Paris, the ancient cemetery of the Bour-

bons, the Valois, and all the long line of French monarchs, were not only defaced on the outside, but utterly broken down, the bodies exposed, the bones dispersed, and the poor remains, even of Henry IV. of Navarre, so long the idol of the French nation, exposed to the rude gaze, and irreverent grasp, of the banditti who committed the sacrilege.

Le Noire, an artist, had the courage to interpose for preventing the total dispersion of the materials of those monuments, so valuable to history and to literature. He procured, with difficulty, permission to preserve and collect them in a house and garden in the *Rue des Petits Augustins*, where their mutilated remains continued in safety till after the Restoration of the Bourbons. The enterprise was accomplished at much personal risk; for if the people he had to deal with had suspected that the zeal which he testified for the preservation of the monuments, was rather that of a royalist than of an antiquary, his idolatry would have been punished by instant death.

But the demolition of those ancient and sacred monuments was comparatively a trivial mode of showing hatred to royalty. The vengeance of the Republicans was directed against the emigrants, who, armed or unarmed, or from whatever cause they were absent from France, were now to be at once confounded in a general set of decrees. 1. All emigrants taken in arms were to suffer death within twenty-four hours. 2. Foreigners who had quitted the service of France since the 14th July 1789, were, contrary to the law of nations, subjected to the same penalty. 3. All emigrants who had sought refuge in foreign parts, were banished for ever from their native country, without any distinction, or inquiry into the cause of their absence. The effects of these unfortunate exiles were already under sequestration, and by the assignats which were issued on the strength of this spoliation, Cambon, who managed the finances, carried on the war, and supplied the expenses of government.

The emigrants who had fled abroad, were not more severely treated than those supposed to share their sentiments who had remained at home. Persons suspected, from whatever cause, or denounced by private malice as disinclined to the new system, were piled anew into the prisons, which had been emptied on the 2d and 3d of September, and where the blood of their predecessors in misfortune was yet visible on the walls. The refractory priests were particularly the objects of this species of oppression, and at length a summary decree was made for transporting them in the mass from the land of France to the unhealthy colony of Guiana, in South America. Many of these unfortunate men came to a more speedy fate.

But the most august victims destined to be sacrificed at the altar of republican virtue, were the royal family in the Temple, whose continuing in existence seemed, doubtless, to the leaders, a daily reproach to their procrastination, and an object to which, when the present spirit should abate, the affections of the bewildered people might return with a sort of re-action. The Jacobins resolved that Louis should die, were it only that the world might see they were not ashamed to attest, with a bloody seal, the truth of the accusations they had brought against him.

On the other hand, there was every reason to hope that the Girondists would exert, in protection of the unhappy prince, whatever vigour they derived from their predominating influence in the Convention. They were, most of them, men, whose philosophy, though it had driven them on wild political speculations, had not destroyed the sense of moral right and wrong, especially now that the struggle was ended betwixt monarchy and democracy, and the only question remaining concerned the use to be made of their victory. Although they had aided the attack on the Tuilleries, on the 10th of August, which they considered as a combat, their hands were unstained with the massacres of September, which, as we shall presently see, they urged as an atrocious crime against the Jacobins. Besides, they had gained the prize, and were in pos-

session of the government; and, like the Constitutionals before them, the Girondists now desired that here, at length, the revolutionary career should terminate, and that the ordinary forms of law and justice should resume their usual channels through France; yielding to the people protection for life, personal liberty, and private property, and affording themselves, who held the reins of government, the means of guiding them honourably, safely, and with advantage to the community.

The philosophical statesmen, upon whom these considerations were not lost, felt nevertheless great embarrassment in the mode of interposing their protection in the King's favour. Their republicanism was the feature on which they most prided themselves. They delighted to claim the share in the downfall of Louis, which was due to their colleague Barbaroux, and the Federates of Marseilles and Brest. It was upon their accession to this deed that the Girondists rested their claims to popularity; and with what front could they now step forward the defenders, at the least the apologists, of the King whom they had aided to dethrone; or what advantages would not the Jacobins obtain over them, when they represented them to the people as lukewarm in their zeal, and as falling off from the popular cause, in order to preserve the life of the dethroned tyrant? The Girondist ministers felt these embarrassments, and suffered themselves to be intimidated by them from making any open, manly, and direct interference in the King's cause.

A woman, and, although a woman, not the least distinguished among the Girondist party, had the courage to urge a decisive and vigorous defence of the unhappy Prince, without having recourse to the veil of a selfish and insidious policy. This was the wife of Roland, one of the most remarkable women of her time. A worthless, at least a careless father, and the doating folly of her mother, had left her when young to pick out such an education as she could, among the indecencies and impieties of French philosophy. Yet, though her *Memoirs* afford revolting specimens of indelicacy, and exaggerated sentiments in politics, it cannot be denied that the tenor of her life was innocent and virtuous in practice, and her sentiments unperverted, when left to their natural course. She saw the great question in its true and real position; she saw, that it was only by interposing themselves betwixt the Legislative Body of France and the commission of a great crime, that the Girondists could either remain firm in the government, attract the confidence of honest men of any description, or have the least chance of putting a period to the anarchy which was devouring their country. "Save the life of Louis," she said; "save him by an open and avowed defence. It is the only measure that can assure your safety—the only course which can fix the stamp of public virtue on your government." Those whom she addressed listened with admiration; but, like one who has rashly climbed to a height where his brain grows giddy, they felt their own situation too tottering to permit their reaching a willing hand to support another, who was in still more imminent peril.

Their condition was indeed precarious. A large party in the Convention avowedly supported them; and in *the Plain*, as it was called, a position held by deputies affecting independence, both of the Girondists and the Jacobins, and therefore occupying the neutral ground betwixt them, sat a large number, who, from the timidity of temper which makes sheep and other weak animals herd together in numbers, had formed themselves into a faction, which could at any time cast decision into either scale which they favoured. But they exercised this power of inclining the balance, less with a view to carrying any political point, than with that of securing their own safety. In ordinary debates, they usually gave their votes to the ministers, both because they were ministers, and also because the milder sentiments of the Girondists were more congenial to the feelings of men, who would gladly have seen peace and order restored. But

then these timid members of the Plain also assiduously courted the Jacobins, avoided joining in any measure which should give them mortal offence, and purchased a sort of immunity from their revenge, by showing plainly that they deserved only contempt. In this neutral party the gleanings of the defeated factions of Moderates and of Constitutionals were chiefly to be found; resigning themselves to the circumstances of the moment, consulting their own safety as they gave their votes, and waiting, perhaps, till less disorderly days might restore to them the privilege of expressing their actual sentiments. The chief of these trucklers to fortune was Barrere, a man of wit and eloquence, prompt invention, supple opinions, and convenient conscience. His terror of the Jacobins was great, and his mode of disarming their resentment, so far as he and the neutral party were concerned, was often very ingenious. When by argument or by eloquence the Girondists had obtained some triumph in the Assembly, which seemed to reduce their adversaries to despair, it was then Barrere, and the members of the Plain, threw themselves between the victors and vanquished, and, by some proposal of an insidious and neutralizing nature, prevented the completion of the conquest, and afforded a safe retreat to the defeated.

The majorities, therefore, which the Girondists obtained in the Assembly, being partly eked out by this heartless and fluctuating band of auxiliaries, could never be supposed to arm them with solid or effective authority. It was absolutely necessary that they should exhibit such a power of protecting themselves and those who should join them, as might plainly show that the force was on their side. This point once established, they might reckon Barrere and his party as faithful adherents. But while the Jacobins retained the power of surrounding the Convention at their pleasure with an insurrection of the suburbs, without the deputies possessing other means of defence than arose out of their inviolability, the adherence of those whose chief object in voting was to secure their personal safety, was neither to be hoped nor expected. The Girondists, therefore, looked anxiously round, to secure, if it were possible, the possession of such a force, to protect themselves and their timorous allies.

It has been thought, that a more active, more artful body of ministers, and who were better acquainted with the mode of carrying on revolutionary movements, might at this period have secured an important auxiliary, by detaching the formidable Danton from the ranks of the enemy, and receiving him into their own. It must be observed, that the camp of the Jacobins contained three separate parties, led each by one of the triumvirs whom we have already described, and acting in concert, for the common purpose of propelling the Revolution by the same violent means which had begun it—of unsheathing the sword of terror, and making it pass for that of justice—and, in the name of liberty, of letting murder and spoil, under the protection of armed ruffians of the basest condition, continue to waste and ravage the departments of France. But although agreed in this main object, the triumvirs were extremely suspicious of each other, and jealous of the rights each might claim in the spoil which they contemplated. Danton despised Robespierre for his cowardice, Robespierre feared the ferocious audacity of Danton; and with him to fear was to hate—and to hate was—when the hour arrived—to destroy. They differed in their ideas also of the mode of exercising their terrible system of government. Danton had often in his mouth the sentence of Machiavel, that when it becomes necessary to shed blood, a single great massacre has a more dreadful effect than a series of successive executions. Robespierre, on the contrary, preferred the latter process as the best way of sustaining the reign of terror. The appetite of Marat could not be satiated but by combining both modes of murder. Both Danton and Robespierre kept aloof from the sanguinary Marat. This position of the chiefs of the Jacobins towards each other, seemed to indicate, that one of the three at least might be detached from the rest, and might bring his ruffians

in opposition to those of his late comrades, in case of any attempt on the Assembly; and policy recommended Danton, not averse, it is said, to the alliance, as the most useful auxiliary.

Among the three monsters mentioned, Danton had that energy which the Girondists wanted, and was well acquainted with the secret movements of those insurrections to which they possessed no key. His vices of wrath, luxury, love of spoil, dreadful as they were, are attributes of mortal men;—the envy of Robespierre, and the instinctive blood-thirstiness of Marat, were the properties of fiends. Danton, like the huge serpent called the Boa, might be approached with a degree of safety when gorged with prey—but the appetite of Marat for blood was like the horse-leech, which says, Not enough—and the slaughterous envy of Robespierre was like the gnawing worm that dieth not, and yields no interval of repose. In glutting Danton with spoil, and furnishing the means of indulging his luxury, the Girondists might have purchased his support; but nothing under the supreme rule in France would have gratified Robespierre; and an unlimited torrent of the blood of that unhappy country could alone have satiated Marat. If a colleague was to be chosen out of that detestable triumvirate, unquestionably Danton was to be considered as the most eligible.

On the other hand, men like Brissot, Vergniaud, and others, whose attachment to republicanism was mixed with a spirit of virtue and honour, might be well adverse to the idea of contaminating their party with such an auxiliary, intensely stained as Danton was by his share in the massacres of September. They might well doubt, whether any physical force which his revolutionary skill, and the arms it could put in motion, might bring to their standard, would compensate for the moral horror with which the presence of such a grisly proselyte must strike all who had any sense of honour or justice. They, therefore, discouraged the advances of Danton, and resolved to comprise him with Marat and Robespierre in the impeachment against the Jacobin chiefs, which they designed to bring forward in the Assembly.

The most obvious means by which the Girondists could ascertain their safety, and the freedom of debate, was by levying a force from the several departments, each contributing its quota, to be called a Departmental Legion, which was to be armed and paid to act as a guard upon the National Convention. The subject was introduced by Roland in a report* to the Assembly, and renewed on the next day by Kersaint, a spirited Girondist, who candidly declared the purpose of his motion: "It was time," he said, "that assassins and their prompters should see that the law had scaffolds."

The Girondists obtained, that a committee of six members should be named, to report on the state of the capital, on the encouragement afforded to massacre, and on the mode of forming a departmental force for the defence of the metropolis. The decree was carried for a moment, but on the next day the Jacobins demanded that it should be revoked, denying that there was any occasion for such a defence to the Convention, and accusing the ministers of an intention to surround themselves with a force of armed satellites, in order to overawe the good city of Paris, and carry into effect their sacrilegious plan of dismembering France. Rebecqui and Barbaroux replied to this charge by impeaching Robespierre, on their own testimony, of aspiring to the post of Dictator. The debate became more tempestuous the more that the tribunes or galleries of the hall were filled with the violent followers of the Jacobin party, who shouted, cursed, and yelled, to back the exclamations and threats of their leaders in the Assembly. While the Girondists were exhausting themselves to find out terms of reproach for Marat, that prodigy stepped forth, and raised the disorder to the highest, by avowing himself the author and advocate for a dic-

* 24th September.

tatorship. The anger of the Convention seemed thoroughly awakened, and Vergniaud read to the deputies an extract from Marat's journal, in which, after demanding one hundred and sixty thousand heads, which was his usual stint, he abused the Convention in the grossest terms, and exhorted the people TO ACT—words of which the import was by this time perfectly understood.

This passage excited general horror, and the victory for a moment seemed in the hands of the Girondists; but they did not pursue it with sufficient vigour. The meeting passed to the order of the day; and Marat, in ostentatious triumph, produced a pistol, with which he said he would have blown out his brains, had a decree of accusation been passed against him. The Girondists not only lost the advantage of discomfiting their enemies by the prosecution of one of their most noted leaders, but were compelled for the present to abandon their plan of a departmental guard, and resign themselves to the guardianship of the faithful citizens of Paris.

This city of Paris was at the time under the power of the intrusive Community, (or Common Council,) many of whom had forced themselves into office on the 10th of August. It was the first act of their administration to procure the assassination of Mandat, the commandant of the National Guard; and their accounts, still extant, bear testimony, that it was by their instrumentality that the murderers of September were levied and paid. Trained Jacobins and pitiless ruffians themselves, this civic body had raised to be their agents and assistants an unusual number of municipal officers, who were at once their guards, their informers, their spies, their jailors, and their executioners. They had, besides, obtained a majority of the inhabitants in most of the sections, whose votes placed them and their agents in command of the National Guard; and the pikemen of the suburbs were always ready to second their excellent Community, even against the Convention itself, which, in point of freedom of action, or effective power, made a figure scarcely more respectable than that of the King after his return from Varennes.

Roland almost every day carried to the Convention his vain complaints, that the course of the law, for which he was responsible, was daily crossed, thwarted, and impeded, by the proceedings of this usurping body. The considerable funds of the city itself, with those of its hospitals and other public establishments of every kind, were dilapidated by these revolutionary intruders, and applied to their own purposes. The Minister at length, in a formal report to the Convention, inculpated the Community in these and such-like offences. In another part of the report, he intimated a plot of the Jacobins to assassinate the Girondists, possess themselves of the government by arms, and choose Robespierre dictator. Louvet denounced Robespierre as a traitor, and Barbaroux proposed a series of decrees. The first declaring the Convention free to leave any city, where they should be exposed to constraint and violence. The second resolving to form a Conventional guard. The third declaring, that the Convention should form itself into a court of justice, for trial of state crimes. The fourth announcing, that in respect the sections of Paris had declared their sittings permanent, that resolution should be abrogated.

Instead of adopting the energetic measures proposed by Barbaroux, the Convention allowed Robespierre several days for his defence against Louvet's accusation, and ordered to the bar* ten members of the Community, from whom they were contented to accept such slight apologies, and evasive excuses, for their unauthorized interference with the power of the Convention, as these insolent demagogues condescended to offer.

The accusation of Robespierre, though boldly urged by Louvet and Barbaroux, was also eluded, by passing to the order of the day; and thus the Convention showed plainly, that however courageous they had been against

* 5th November.

their monarch, they dared not protect the liberty which they boasted of, against the encroachment of fiercer demagogues than themselves.

Barbaroux endeavoured to embolden the Assembly, by bringing once more from his native city a body of those fiery Marseillois, who had formed the vanguard of the mob on the 10th of August. He succeeded so far in his scheme, that a few scores of those Federates again appeared in Paris, where their altered demeanour excited surprise. Their songs were again chanted, their wild Moresco dances and gestures again surprised the Parisians; and the more, as in their choruses they imprecated vengeance on the Jacobins, called out for mercy to the "poor tyrant," so they termed the King, and shouted in the cause of peace, order, and the Convention.

The citizens of Paris, who could not reconcile the songs and exclamations of the Marseillois with their appearance and character, concluded that a snare was laid for them, and abstained from uniting themselves with men, whose sincerity was so suspicious. The Marseillois themselves, discouraged with their cold reception, or not liking their new trade of maintaining order so well as their old one of oversetting it, melted away by degrees, and were soon no more seen or heard of. Some of the Breton Federates, kept in the interest of the Girondists, by their countrymen the deputies Kersaint and Kervclagan, remained still attached to the Convention, though their numbers were too few to afford them protection in any general danger.

If the Memoirs of Dumouriez are to be relied on, that active and intriguing general presented to the Girondists another resource, not free certainly from hazard or difficulty to the Republican government, which was the idol of these theoretical statesmen, but affording, if his means had proved adequate to the execution of his plans, a certain bulwark against the encroachments of the hideous anarchy threatened by the Jacobin ascendancy.

General Dumouriez was sufficiently hated by the Jacobins, notwithstanding the successes which he had gained on the part of France over foreign enemies, to induce him to feel the utmost desire of putting down their usurped power; but he was under the necessity of acting with great caution. The bad success of La Fayette, deserted by his army as soon as he attempted to lead them against Paris, was in itself discouraging; but Dumouriez was besides conscious that the Jacobin clubs, together with the commissioners of the Convention with Danton at their head, had been actively engaged in disorganizing his army, and diminishing his influence over them. Thus circumstanced, he naturally resolved to avoid hazarding any violent measure without the support of the Convention, in case of being deserted by his army. But he affirms that he repeatedly informed the Girondists, then predominant in the Assembly, that if they could obtain a decree, but of four lines, authorizing such a measure, he was ready to march to Paris at the head of a chosen body of troops, who would have been willing to obey such a summons; and that he would by this means have placed the Convention in a situation, when they might have set the Jacobins and their insurrectionary forces at absolute defiance.

Perhaps the Girondists entertained the fear, first, that Dumouriez's influence with his troops might prove as inefficient as that of La Fayette, and leave them to atone with their heads for such a measure attempted and unexecuted. Or, secondly, that if the manœuvre proved successful, they would be freed from fear of the Jacobins, only to be placed under the restraint of a military chief, whose mind was well understood to be in favour of monarchy of one kind or other. So that, conceiving they saw equal risk in the alternative, they preferred the hazard of seeing their fair and favourite vision of a Republic overthrown by the pikes of the Jacobins, rather than by the bayonets of Dumouriez's army. They turned, therefore, a cold ear to the proposal, which afterwards they would gladly have accepted, when the general had no longer the power to carry it into execution.

Thus the factions, so intimately united for the destruction of royalty, could not, when that step was gained, combine for any other purpose save the great crime of murdering their deposed sovereign. Nay, while the Jacobins and Girondists seemed moving hand in hand to the ultimate completion of that joint undertaking, the union was only in outward appearance; for the Girondists, though apparently acting in concert with their stern rivals, were in fact dragged after them by compulsion, and played the part less of actors than subdued captives in this final triumph of democracy. They were fully persuaded of the King's innocence as a man, of his inviolability and exemption from criminal process as a constitutional authority. They were aware that the deed meditated would render France odious to all the other nations of Europe; and that the Jacobins, to whom war and confusion were natural elements, were desirous for that very reason to bring Louis to the scaffold. All this was plain to them, and yet their pride as philosophers made them ashamed to be thought capable of interesting themselves in the fate of a tyrant; and their desire of getting the French nation under their own exclusive government, induced them to consent to anything rather than protect the obnoxious though innocent sovereign, at the hazard of losing their popularity, and forfeiting their dearly-won character of being true Republicans.

A committee of twenty-four persons had been appointed early in the Session of the Convention, to inquire into, and report upon, the grounds for accusing Louis. Their report was brought up on the 1st of November, 1793, and a more loathsome tissue of confusion and falsehood never was laid upon the table of such an Assembly. All acts that had been done by the ministers in every department, which could be twisted into such a shape as the times called criminal, were charged as deeds, for which the sovereign was himself responsible; and the burthen of the whole was to accuse the King, when he had scarcely a single regiment of guards even at his nominal disposal, of nourishing the intention of massacring the Convention, defended by thirty thousand National Guards, besides the Federates, and the militia of the suburbs.

The Convention were rather ashamed of this report, and would scarce permit it to be printed. So soon as it appeared, two or three persons, who were therein mentioned as accomplices of particular acts charged against the King, contradicted the report upon their oath.* An additional charge was brought under the following mysterious circumstances:—Gamin, a locksmith of Versailles, communicated to Roland about the latter end of December, that in the beginning of May 1792, he had been employed by the King to secrete an iron-chest, or cabinet, in the wall of a certain apartment in the Tuilleries, which he disclosed to the ministers of justice. He added a circumstance which throws discredit on his whole story, namely, that the King gave him with his own hand a glass of wine, after taking which he was seized with a colic, followed by a kind of paralysis, which deprived him for *fourteen* months of the use of his limbs, and the power of working for his bread. The inference of the wretch was, that the King had attempted to poison him; which those may believe who can number fourteen months betwixt the beginning of May and the end of December in the same year. This gross falsehood utterly destroys Gamin's evidence; and as the King always denied his knowledge of the existence of such a chest with such papers, we are reduced to suppose, either that Gamin had been employed by one of the royal ministers, and had brought the King personally into the tale for the greater grace of his story, or that the papers found in some other place of safety had been selected, and put into the chest by the Jacobin commissioners, then employed in surveying and searching the palace, with the purpose of trumping up evidence against the King.

* Monsieur de Septuieil, in particular, quoted as being the agent by whom Louis XVI. was said to have transmitted money to his brothers when in exile, positively denied the fact, and made affidavit accordingly.

Roland acted very imprudently in examining the contents of the chest alone and without witness, instead of calling in the commissioners aforesaid, who were in the palace at the time. This was perhaps done with the object of putting aside such papers as might, in that hour of fear and uncertainty, have brought into danger some of his own party or friends. One of importance, however, was found, which the Jacobins turned into an implement against the Girondists. It was an overture from that party addressed to the King, shortly before the 10th of August, engaging to oppose the motion for the forfeiture of the King, providing Louis would recall to his councils the three discarded ministers of their faction.

The contents of the chest were of a very miscellaneous nature. The documents consisted of letters, memorials, and plans, from different persons, and at different dates, offering advice, or tendering support to the King, and proposing plans for the freedom of his person. The Royalist project of Mirabeau, in his latter days, was found amongst the rest; in consequence of which his body was dragged out of the Pantheon, formerly the Church of Saint Genevieve, now destined to receive the bodies of the great men of the Revolution, but whose lodgings shifted as often as if they had been taken by the month.

The documents, as we have said, consisted chiefly of projects for the King's service, on which he certainly never acted, probably never approved of, and perhaps never saw. The utmost to which he could be liable, was such penalty as may be due to one who retains possession of plans submitted to his consideration, but which have in no shape obtained his assent. It was sufficiently hard to account Louis responsible for such advice of his ministers as he really adopted; but it was a dreadful extension of his responsibility to make him answerable for such as he had virtually rejected. Besides which, the story of Gamin was so self-contradictory in one circumstance, and so doubtful in others, as to carry no available proof that the papers had been in the King's possession; so that this new charge was as groundless as those brought up by the first committee, and, arguing upon the known law of any civilized country, the accusations against him ought to have been dismissed, as founded on the most notorious injustice.

There was one circumstance which probably urged those into whose hands Louis had fallen, to proceed against his person to the uttermost. They knew that, in English history, a king had been condemned to death by his subjects, and were resolved that France should not remain behind England in the exhibition of a spectacle so interesting and edifying to a people newly regenerated. This parallel case would not perhaps have been thought a worthy precedent in other countries; but in France there is a spirit of wild enthusiasm, a desire of following out an example even to the most exaggerated point, and of outdoing, if possible, what other nations have done before them. This had doubtless its influence in causing Louis to be brought to the bar in 1793, like Charles of England in 1648.

The French statesmen did not pause to reflect, that the violent death of Charles only paved the way for a series of years spent in servitude under military despotism, and then to restoration of the legitimate sovereign. Had they regarded the precedent on this side, they would have obtained a glimpse into futurity, and might have presaged what were to be the consequences of the death of Louis. Neither did the French consider, that by a great part of the English nation the execution of Charles Stuart is regarded as a national crime, and the anniversary still observed as a day of fasting and penitence; that others who condemn the King's conduct in and preceding the Civil War, do, like the Whig Churchill, still consider his death as an unconstitutional action;* that the

* Unhappy Stuart! harshly though that name
Grates on my ear, I should have died with shame,
To see my King before his subjects stand,
And at their bar hold up his royal hand;

number is small indeed who think it justifiable even on the precarious grounds of state necessity; and that it is barely possible a small portion of enthusiasts may still exist, who glory in the deed as an act of popular vengeance.

But even among this last description of persons, the French regicides would find themselves entirely at a loss to vindicate the execution of Louis by the similar fate of Charles; and it would be by courtesy only, if at all, that they could be admitted to the honours of the sitting at a Calves-Head Club.

The comparison between these unhappy monarchs fails in almost every point, excepting in the closing scene; and no parallel can, with justice to either, be drawn betwixt them. The most zealous Cavalier will, in these enlightened days, admit, that the early government of Charles was marked by many efforts to extend the prerogative beyond its legal bounds; that there were instances of oppressive fines, cruel punishments by mutilation, long and severe imprisonment in distant forts and castles; exertions of authority which no one seeks to justify, and which those who are the King's apologists can only endeavour to mitigate, by alleging the precedents of arbitrary times, or the interpretation of the laws by courtly ministers, and time-serving lawyers. The conduct of Louis XVI., from the hour he assumed the throne, was, on the contrary, an example of virtue and moderation. Instead of levying ship-money and benevolences, Louis lightened the feudal services of the vassals, and the *corvée* among the peasantry. Where Charles endeavoured to enforce conformity to the Church of England by pillory and ear-slitting, Louis allowed the Protestants the free use of their religion, and discharged the use of torture in all cases whatever. Where Charles visited his Parliament to violate their freedom by arresting five of their members, Louis may be said to have surrendered himself an unresisting prisoner to the representatives of the people, whom he had voluntarily summoned around him. But above all, Charles, in person, or by his generals, waged a long and bloody war with his subjects, fought battles in every county of England, and was only overcome and made prisoner, after a lengthened and deadly contest, in which many thousands fell on both sides. The conduct of Louis was in every respect different. He never offered one blow in actual resistance, even when he had the means in his power. He ordered up, indeed, the forces under Mareschal Broglio; but he gave them command to retire, so soon as it was evident that they must either do so, or act offensively against the people. In the most perilous situations of his life, he showed the utmost reluctance to shed the blood of his subjects. He would not trust his attendants with pistols, during the flight to Varennes; he would not give the officer of hussars orders to clear the passage, when his carriage was stopped upon the bridge. When he saw that the martial array of the Guards did not check the audacity of the assailants on the 10th of August, he surrendered himself to the Legislative Assembly, a prisoner at discretion, rather than mount his horse and place himself at the head of his faithful troops and subjects. The blood that was shed that day was without command of his. He could have no reason for encouraging such a strife, which, far from defending his person, then in the custody of the Assembly, was likely to place it in the most imminent danger. And in the very last stage, when he received private notice that there were individuals determined to save his life at peril of their own, he forbade the enterprise.

At their command to hear the monarch plead,
 By their decrees to see that monarch bleed.
 What though thy faults were many, and were great—
 What though they shook the fabric of the state?
 In royalty secure thy person stood,
 And sacred was the fountain of thy blood.
 Vile ministers, who dared abuse their trust,
 Who dared seduce a king to be unjust,
 Vengeance, with justice leagued, with power made strong,
 Had nobly crush'd—The King can do no wrong.

CHURCHILL'S Gotham.

"Let not a drop of blood be shed on my account," he said; "I would not consent to it for the safety of my crown: I never will purchase mere life at such a rate." These were sentiments perhaps fitter for the pious sectaries of the community of Friends, than for the King of a great nation; but such as they were, Louis felt and conscientiously acted on them. And yet his subjects could compare his character, and his pretended guilt, with the bold and haughty Stuart, who, in the course of the Civil War, bore arms in person, and charged at the head of his own regiment of Guards!

Viewed in his kingly duty, the conduct of Louis is equally void of blame; unless it be that blame which attaches to a prince, too yielding and mild to defend the just rights of his crown. He yielded, with feeble struggling, to every demand in succession which was made upon him, and gave way to every inroad on the existing state of France. Instead of placing himself as a barrier between his people and his nobility, and bringing both to some fair terms of composition, he suffered the latter to be driven from his side, and by the ravaging their estates, and the burning of their houses, to be hurried into emigration. He adopted one popular improvement after another, each innovating on the royal authority, or derogatory to the royal dignity. Far from having deserved the charge of opposing the nation's claim of freedom, it would have been well for themselves and him, had he known how to limit his grant to that quantity of freedom which they were qualified to make a legitimate use of; leaving it for future princes to slacken the reins of government, in proportion as the public mind in France should become formed to the habitual exercise of political rights.

The King's perfect innocence was therefore notorious to the whole world, but especially to those who now usurped the title of arraigning him; and men could hardly persuade themselves, that his life was seriously in danger. An ingenious contrivance of the Jacobins seems to have been intended to drive the wavering Girondists into the snare of voting for the King's trial. Saint Just, one of their number, made a furious speech against any formality being observed, save a decree of death, on the urgency of the occasion. "What availed," said the supporters of this brief and sure measure, "the ceremonies of Grand and Petty Jury? The cannon which made a breach in the Tuilleries, the unanimous shout of the people on the 10th of August, had come in place of all other solemnities. The Convention had no farther power to inquire; its sole duty was to pronounce, or rather confirm and execute, the doom of the sovereign people."

This summary proposal was highly applauded, not only by the furious crowds by whom the galleries were always occupied, but by all the exaggerations of the more violent democrats. They exclaimed that every citizen had the same right over the life of Louis which Brutus possessed over that of Cæsar. Others cried out, that the very fact of having reigned, was in itself a crime notorious enough to dispense with further investigation, and authorize instant punishment.

Stunned by these clamours, the Girondists and neutral party, like all feeble-minded men, chose a middle course, and instead of maintaining the King's innocence, adopted measures, calculated to save him indeed from immediate slaughter, but which ended by consigning him to a tribunal too timid to hear his cause justly. They resolved to urge the right of the National Convention to judge in the case of Louis.

There were none in the Convention that dared to avow facts to which their conscience bore witness, but the consequences of admitting which, were ingeniously urged by the sophist Robespierre, as a condemnation of their own conduct. "One party," said the wily logician, "must be clearly guilty; either the King, or the Convention, who have ratified the actions of the insurgent people. If you have dethroned an innocent and legal monarch, what are you but traitors? and why sit you here—why not hasten to the Temple, set Louis

at liberty, install him again in the Tuilleries, and beg on your knees for a pardon you have not merited? But if you have, in the great popular act which you have ratified, only approved of the deposition of a tyrant, summon him to the bar, and demand a reckoning for his crimes." This dilemma pressed on the mind of many members, who could not but see their own condemnation the necessary consequence of the King's acquittal. And while some felt the force of this argument, all were aware of the obvious danger to be encountered from the wrath of the Jacobins and their satellites, should they dare to dissent from the vote which these demagogues demanded from the Assembly.

When Robespierre had ended, Pethion arose and moved, that the King should be tried before the Convention. It is said, the Mayor of Paris took the lead in this cruel persecution, because Louis had spoken to him sharply about the tumultuary inroad of the Jacobin rabble into the Tuilleries on the 20th of June; and when Pethion attempted to reply, had pointed to the broken grating through which the entrance had been forced, and sternly commanded him to be silent. If this was true, it was a bitter revenge for so slight an offence, and the subsequent fate of Pethion is the less deserving of pity.

The motion was carried without opposition, and the next chapter affords us the melancholy results.

CHAPTER XIII.

Indecision of the Girondists, and its Effects.—The Royal Family in the Temple—Insulted by the Agents of the Community, both within and without the Prison—Their exemplary Patience.—The King deprived of his Son's Society.—Buzot's Admission of the general dislike of France to a Republican Form of Government.—The King brought to Trial before the Convention—His first Examination—Carried back to Prison amidst Insult and Abuse.—Tumult in the Assembly.—The King deprived of Intercourse with his Family.—Malesherbes appointed as Counsel to defend the King—and De Seze.—Louis again brought before the Convention—Opening Speech of De Seze—King remanded to the Temple.—Stormy Debate in the Convention.—Eloquent Attack of Vergniaud on the Jacobins.—Sentence of DEATH pronounced against the King—General Sympathy for his Fate.—Dumouriez arrives in Paris—Vainly tries to avert the King's Fate.—LOUIS XVI. BEHEADED ON 21ST JANUARY 1793—MARIE ANTOINETTE on the 16th October thereafter—The Princess ELIZABETH in May 1794—The Dauphin Perishes, by Cruelty, June 8th, 1795.—The Princess Royal exchanged for La Fayette, 19th December 1795.

We have already said, that the vigorous and masculine, as well as virtuous exhortations of Madame Roland, were thrown away upon her colleagues, whose fears were more than female. The Girondists could not be made to perceive, that, though their ferocious adversaries were feared through France, yet they were also hated. The moral feeling of all Frenchmen who had any left, detested the authors of a long train of the most cold-blooded murders; the suspicions of all men of property were attached to the conduct of a party, whose leaders rose from indigence to affluence by fines, confiscations, sequestrations, besides every other kind of plunder, direct and indirect. If the majority of the Convention had adopted the determination of boldly resisting their unprincipled tyrants, and preventing, at whatever hazard, the murder of the King, the strength of the country would probably have supported a constituted authority against the usurpations of the Community of Paris, which had no better

title to tyrannize over the Convention, and by so doing to govern France at pleasure, than had the council of the meanest town in the kingdom.

The Girondists ought to have been sensible, that, even by thwarting this favourite measure, they could not increase the hatred which the Jacobins already entertained against them, and should have known that further delay to give open battle, would not be received as an overture of friendship, but be regarded as a timid indecision, which must have heated their enemies, in proportion as it cooled their friends. The truckling, time-serving policy which they observed on this occasion, deprived the Girondists of almost all chance of forming a solid and substantial interest in the country. By a bold, open, and manly defence of the King, they would have done honour to themselves as public men, willing to discharge their duty at the risk of their lives. They would have been sure of whatever number could be gathered, either of royalists, who were beginning to raise a head in Bretagne and La Vendée, or of Constitutionals, who feared the persecution of the Jacobins. The materials were already kindled for those insurrections, which afterwards broke out at Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon, and generally through the south and west of France. They might have brought up five or six thousand Federates from the departments, and the force would then have been in their own hands. They might, by showing a bold and animated front, have regained possession of the National Guard, which was only prevented by a Jacobin commander and his staff officers, as well as by their timidity, from throwing off a yoke so bloody and odious as that which they were groaning under. But to dare this, it was necessary that they should have the encouragement of the Convention; and that body, managed as it was by the Girondists, showed a timorous unwillingness to support the measures of the Jacobins, which implied their dislike indeed, but also evinced their fear.

Meantime the King, with the Queen, his sister, and their children, the Dauphin and the Princess Royal, remained in the Tower of the Temple, more uncomfortably lodged, and much more harshly treated, than state prisoners before the Revolution had been in the execrable Bastille.* The royal prisoners were under the especial charge of the Community of Paris, who, partly from their gross ignorance, partly from their desire to display their furious Jacobinical zeal, did all in their power to embitter their captivity.

Pethion, whose presence brought with it so many cruel recollections, studiously insulted him by his visits to the prison. The municipal officers sent thither to ensure the custody of the King's person, and to be spies upon his private conversation, were selected among the worst and most malignant Jacobins. His efforts at equanimity, and even civility, towards these brutal jailors, were answered with the most gross insolence. One of them, a mason, in his working dress, had thrown himself into an arm-chair, where, decorated with his municipal scarf, he reposed at his ease. The King condescended to ask him, by way of conversation, where he wrought. He answered gruffly, "at the Church of Saint Genevieve."—"I remember," said the King, "I laid the foundation stone—a fine edifice; but I have heard the foundation is insecure."—"It is more sure," answered the fellow, "than the thrones of tyrants." The King smiled and was silent. He endured with the same patience the insolent answer of another of these officials. The man not having been relieved at the usual and regular hour, the King civilly expressed his hopes that he would find no inconvenience from the delay. "I am come here," answered the ruffian, "to watch your conduct, not for you to trouble yourself with mine. No one," he added, fixing his hat firm on his brow, "least of all you, have any

* The reader may compare the account which Marmontel gives of his residence in the Bastille, with the faithful Clery's narrative of Louis's captivity in the Temple.

business to concern themselves with it." We have seen prisons, and are sure that even the steeled jailor, accustomed as he is to scenes of distress, is not in the habit, unprovoked and wantonly, of answering with reproach and insult such ordinary expressions of civility, when offered by the worst criminals. The hearts of these men, who, by chance as it were, became dungeon-keepers, and whose first captive had been many years their King, must have been as hard as the nether millstone.

While such scenes occurred within the prison, those who kept watch without, either as sentinels or as patrols of the Jacobins, (who maintained stern vigilance in the environs of the prison,) were equally ready to contribute their share of vexation and insult. Pictures and placards, representing the royal family under the hands of the executioner, were pasted up where the King and Queen might see them. The most violent patriotic songs, turning upon the approaching death of Monsieur and Madame Veto, were sung below their windows, and the most frightful cries for their blood disturbed such rest as prisoners can obtain. The head of the Princess of Lamballe was brought under their window on the 3d September, and one of the municipal officers would have enticed the royal family to the window that they might see this ghastly spectacle, had not the other, "of milder mood," prevented them from complying. When questioned concerning the names of these two functionaries by some less savage persons, who wished to punish the offending ruffian, Louis would only mention that of the more humane of the two; so little was this unhappy prince addicted to seek revenge, even for the most studied cruelties practised against him.

The conduct of the Community increased in rigour, as the process against Louis seemed to draw nearer. The most ordinary points of personal accommodation were made subjects of debate ere they could be granted, and that upon the King's being permitted to shave himself, lasted a long while. Every article was taken from him, even to his tooth-pick and penknife, and the Queen and princesses were deprived of their scissors and housewives. This led to a touching remark of Louis. He saw his sister, while at work, obliged to bite asunder a thread which she had no means of cutting, and the words escaped him, "Ah! you wanted nothing in your pretty house at Montreuil."—"Dearest brother," answered the princess, whose character was that of sanctity, purity of thought, and benevolence, "can I complain of anything, since Heaven has preserved me to share and to comfort, in some degree, your hours of captivity?" It was, indeed, in the society of his family that the character of Louis shone to the greatest advantage; and if, when on the throne, he did not always possess the energies demanded of his high situation, in the dungeon of the Temple misfortune threw around him the glories of a martyr. His morning hours were spent in instructing or amusing the young Dauphin, a task for which the King's extensive information well qualified him. The captives enjoyed, as they best might, a short interval, when they were permitted to walk in the gardens of the Temple, sure to be insulted (like Charles I. in the same situation) by the sentinels, who puffed volumes of tobacco-smoke in their faces as they passed them, while others annoyed the ears of the ladies with licentious songs, or the most cruel denunciations.

All this Louis and his family endured with such sainted patience, that several who obtained access to his person were moved by the spectacle of royalty reduced to a situation so melancholy, yet sustained with such gentleness and fortitude. Some of the municipal officers themselves became melted, and changed their ideas of the King, when they beheld him in so new and singular a light.

Stories of the insults which he daily received, and of the meekness with which he sustained them, began to circulate among the citizens of the higher classes; and, joined to their fear of falling completely under the authority of the sans

caulottes, led many of the Republicans to cast back their thoughts to the Constitution of 1791, with all its faults, and with its monarchical executive government.

The more wise and sensible of the Girondists began to suspect that they had been too hasty in erecting their favourite Republic, on ground incapable of affording a sound and secure foundation for such an edifice. Buzot gives testimony to this, dated later, no doubt, than the period we are treating of; but the grounds of the reasoning existed as much at the King's trial as after the expulsion of the Girondists. The passage is remarkable. "My friends," says this distinguished Girondist, "preserved a long time the hopes of establishing a republic in France, even when all seemed to demonstrate that the enlightened classes, whether from prejudice or from just reasoning, felt indisposed to that form of government. That hope did not forsake my friends when the most wicked and vilest of men obtained possession of the minds of the inferior classes, and corrupted them by the opportunities they offered of license and pillage. My friends reckoned on the lightness and aptitude to change proper to the French character, and which they considered to be peculiarly suitable to a republican nation. I have always considered that conclusion as entirely false, and have repeatedly in my heart despaired of my darling wish to establish a republic in my country." In another place he says, "It must not be dissembled that the majority of Frenchmen earnestly desired royalty, and the constitution of 1791. In Paris, the wish was general, and was expressed most freely, though only in confidential society, and among private friends. There were only a few noble and elevated minds who felt themselves worthy to be Republicans, and whom the example of the Americans had encouraged to essay the project of a similar government in France, the country of frivolity and mutability. The rest of the nation, with the exception of the ignorant wretches, without either sense or substance, who vomited abuse against royalty, as at another time they would have done against a commonwealth, and all without knowing why,—the rest of the nation were all attached to the constitution of 1791, and looked on the pure Republicans as a very well-meaning kind of madmen."

In these lines, written by one of the most sincere of their number, we read the condemnation of the Girondists, who, to adventure the precarious experiment of a republic, in which they themselves saw so many difficulties, were contented to lend their arms and countenance to the destruction of that very government, which they knew to be desired by all the enlightened classes of France except themselves, and which demolition only made room for the dreadful triumvirate,—Danton, Robespierre, and Marat.

But we also see, from this and other passages, that there existed feelings; both in Paris and in the departments, which, if the Convention had made a manly appeal to them, might have saved the King's life, and prevented the Reign of Terror. There began to arise more obvious signs of disaffection to the rulers, and of interest in the King's fate. These were increased when he was brought before the Convention for examination, an occasion upon which Louis was treated with the same marked appearance of premeditated insult, which had been offered to him when in his dungeon. He had as yet been allowed to enjoy the society of his son, though his intercourse with the other members of the family had been much abridged. He was passionately attached to this unhappy son, who answered his affection, and showed early token of talents which were doomed never to blossom. It was the cruel resolution of his jailors to take the boy from his father on the very morning* when Louis was to undergo an interrogatory before the Convention. In other words, to give the deepest blow to his feelings, at the very moment when it was necessary he should combine his whole mental powers for defending his life against his subtle and powerful enemies.

* 11th December.

This cruel measure produced in some respect the effect desired. The King testified more deep affliction than he had yet manifested. The child was playing at the game called Siam with his father, and by no effort could the Dauphin get beyond the number *sixteen*. "That is a very unlucky number," said the child. "True, indeed, my child. I have long had reason to think so, my son," answered the King. This petty omen seemed soon accomplished by the commissioners of the Assembly, who, without deigning further explanation than that Louis must prepare to receive the Mayor of Paris, tore the child from his father, and left him to his sorrow. In about two hours, during which the trampling of many horses was heard, and a formidable body of troops with artillery were drawn up around the prison, the mayor appeared, a man called Chambon, weak and illiterate, the willing tool of the ferocious Community in which he presided. He read to the King the decree of the Convention, that Louis Capet should be brought to their bar. "Capet," answered Louis, "is not my name—it was that of one of my ancestors. I could have wished that I had not been deprived of the society of my son during the two hours I have expected you—but it is only of a piece with the usage I have experienced for four months. I will attend you to the Convention, not as acknowledging their right to summon me, but because I yield to the superior power of my enemies."

The crowd pressed much on the King during the passage from the Temple to the Tuilleries, where the Convention had now established their sittings, as men who had slain and taken possession. Loud cries were heard, demanding the life of the tyrant; yet Louis preserved the most perfect composure, even when he found himself standing as a criminal before an assembly of his native subjects, born most of them in a rank which excluded them from judicial offices, till he himself had granted the privilege.

"Louis," said the President, (the versatile, timorous, but subtle Barrere,) "you may be seated." The King sat down accordingly, and listened without apparent emotion to a long act of accusation, in which every accident that had arisen out of the Revolution was gravely charged as a point of indictment against the King. He replied by short laconic answers, which evinced great presence of mind and composure, and alleged the decrees of the National Assembly as authority for the affair of Nancy, and the firing on the people in the Champ-de-Mars, both of which were urged against him as aggressions on the people. One or two replies we cannot omit inserting.

"You are accused," said the President, "of having authorized money to be distributed to poor unknowns in the suburb of Saint Antoine. What have you to reply?"—"That I know no greater pleasure," answered Louis, "than in giving assistance to the needy."—"You held a review of the Swiss at five o'clock in the morning of the 10th of August."—"I did," replied the King, "review the troops that were about my person. It was in presence of the constituted authorities, the department, and the Mayor of Paris—I had sent in vain to request from the Convention a deputation of its members, and I came with my family to place myself in their hands."—"Why did you double the strength of the Swiss Guards at that time?" demanded the President.—"It was done with the knowledge of all the constituted authorities," said the King, in a tone of perfect composure; "I was myself a constituted authority, I have a right to defend my office."—"You have caused," said the President, "the blood of Frenchmen to be shed. What have you to reply?"—"It was not I who caused it," answered Louis, speaking with more emphasis than he had before used.

The King was carried back to his prison, amid threats and abuse from the same banditti whose ranks he had before traversed.

In replying to the articles alleged against him, Louis had followed a different course from Charles, who refused to plead before the tribunal at which he was arraigned. The latter acted with the high spirit of a prince, unwilling to dero-

grate from the honour of the crown he had worn; the former, as a man of honour and probity, was desirous of defending his character wherever it should be attacked, without stopping to question the authority of the court which was met to try him.

A great tumult followed in the Assembly the moment when the King had withdrawn from the Hall. The Jacobins became sensible that the scene which had just passed had deeply affected many of the neutral party, and was not unlikely to influence their final votes. They demanded an instant decree of condemnation, and that in the name of the oppressed people. "You who have heard the tyrant," said Billaud de Varennes, "ought in justice to hear the people whom he has oppressed." The Convention knew well what was meant by the appearance of the people at the bar, and while they trembled at this threat, Duhem made a motion that the King should be executed that very night. The majority, however, retained too much sense of shame to permit themselves to be hurried farther that evening. They indulged the King with the selection of counsel to defend him.

The monarch, on returning to his prison, had found he was doomed to solitary confinement. All intercourse with his family was denied him. He wept, but neither wife, sister, nor child, was permitted to share his tears. It was for the fate of his son that he showed the deepest interest. Yet, anxious as his apprehensions were, they could not reach the extremities to which the child was reduced. The heart of man could not have imagined the cruelty of his lot.

Louis chose for his counsel two lawyers of celebrity, carefully selecting such as he thought would incur least risk of danger by the task imposed. One of these, Tronchet, was too sensible to the honour of his profession to hesitate a moment in accepting the perilous office; but the other, Target, refused to undertake it. The phrase used by this unworthy jurisconsult seemed to involve the King's condemnation. "A free republican," he said, "ought not to undertake functions of which he feels himself incapable." Timid as the Convention was, this excuse was heard with disapprobation. It was declaring that the defence of the King was untenable by any friend of the present system.

Several persons offered their services with voluntary devotion, but the preference was claimed by Lamoignon Malesherbes, who, twice called by Louis to be a member of his council, when the office was the object of general ambition, alleged his right to a similar function, when others might reckon it dangerous. This burst of honourable self-devotion awakened a sentiment of honour in the Convention, which, could it have lasted, might have even yet prevented a great national crime.

Paris began to show symptoms of returning interest in the person of Louis. The oft-repeated calumnies against him seemed to lose their influence on all but the ignorant multitude, and hired bandits. The honest devotion of Malesherbes, whose character was known through the nation as a man of talent, honour, and probity, reflected a forcible light on that of his royal client, who had, in the hour of need, found such a defender. De Seze, an excellent lawyer, was afterwards added to the King's band of counsel; but the King gained little more by this indulgence, excepting the consolation of communicating with such men as Malesherbes and his two associates, at a time when no other friend was suffered to approach him, excepting the faithful Clery, his valet-de-chambre.*

The lawyers entertained some hopes, and, in the spirit of their profession, exulted when they saw how facts contradicted the charges of the prosecutors. "Moderate your satisfaction, my friends," said Louis; "all these favourable circumstances are well known to the gentlemen of the Convention, and if they

* Clery we have seen and known, and the form and manners of that model of pristine faith and loyalty can never be forgotten. Gentlemanlike and complaisant in his manners, his deep gravity and melancholy features announced, that the sad scenes in which he had acted a part so honourable, were never for a moment out of his memory.

considered them as entitled to weight in my favour, I should not be in this difficulty. You take, I fear, a fruitless task in hand, but let us perform it as a last duty." When the term of his second appearance at the Convention arrived, he expressed anxiety at the thoughts of appearing before them with his beard and hair overgrown, owing to his being deprived of razors and scissors. "Were it not better your Majesty went as you are at present," said the faithful Clergy, "that all men may see the usage you have received?"—"It does not become me," answered the King, "to seek to obtain pity." With the same spirit, he commanded his advocates to avoid all appeals to the passions or the feelings of the judges and audience, and to rest his defence exclusively upon logical deductions from the evidence produced.

When summoned to the Convention, Louis was compelled to wait for a time in the outer hall, where he walked about conversing with his counsel. A deputy who passed, heard Malesherbes during this intercourse use to his royal client the courtesies of *Sire—Your Majesty*. "What renders you so bold," he said, "that you utter these prohibited expressions?"—"Contempt of life," answered the generous Malesherbes.

De Seze opened his case with great ability. He pleaded with animation the right which the King had to the character of inviolability, a right confirmed to him by the Legislative Assembly after the flight to Varennes, and which implied a complete indemnity for that crime, even supposing a journey from his capital in a post carriage, with a few attendants, could be deemed criminal. But he urged that, if the Convention did not respect his inviolability—if, in a word, they did not consider him as a King, he was then entitled to the formal securities provided for every citizen by the laws. He ridiculed the idea that, with a trifling force of Swiss, Louis could meditate any serious injury against the Convention. "He prepared," said De Seze, "for his defence, as you citizens would doubtless do, when you heard that an armed multitude were on their way to surprise you in your sanctuary." He closed an excellent pleading with an enumeration of the benefits which Louis had conferred on the French nation, and reminded them that their King had given them liberty so soon as they desired to be free. Louis himself said a few words with much firmness. He was remanded to the Temple, and a stormy debate commenced.

At first, the Jacobins attempted to carry all by a clamorous demand of the vote. Lanjuinais replied to them with unexpected spirit, charged them with planning and instigating the assault on the 10th of August, and then with turning on the King the blame which justly lay with themselves alone. Dreadful outcries followed this true and intrepid speech. "Let the friends of the despot die with him!" was the general exclamation of the Jacobins; "to the Abbey—to the scaffold with the perjured deputy, who slanders the glorious 10th of August!"—"Be it so," answered Lanjuinais. "Better death, than the crime of pronouncing an unjust sentence."

The Girondists were too much themselves accessory to the attack on the Tuilleries to follow this bold and manly line of defence, and Lanjuinais stood unsupported in his opinion.

Saint Just and Robespierre eagerly called for a doom of death. The former accused the King of a design to cheat the people out of their liberties by a pretended show of submission to their will, and an affected moderation in exercising his authority. On the 10th of August, (he had the effrontery to state this,) the King, entering the hall of the Convention with armed followers, (the small escort who had difficulty in protecting him through the armed crowd,) had violated the asylum of the laws. Besides, as he triumphantly concluded, was it for a people who had declared war against all the tyrants in the world, to sorrow for the fate of their own? Robespierre openly disowned the application of legal forms, and written rubrics of law, to such a case as was before the Convention. The people who had asserted their own right in wresting the

sceptre from the hands of Louis, had a right to punish him for having swayed it. He talked of the case being already decided by the unanimous voice and act of the people, from whom all legal authority emanated, and whose authority was paramount to that of the Convention, which were only their representatives.

Vergniaud, the most eloquent of the Girondists, found nothing better to propose, than that the case of Louis should be decided by an appeal to the nation. He alleged that the people, who, in solemn federation had sworn, in the Champ-de-Mars, to recognise the Constitution, had thereby sworn the inviolability of the King. This was truly said; but, such being the case, what right had the Convention to protract the King's trial by sending the case from before themselves to the people? If his inviolability had been formally admitted and sworn to by the nation, what had the Convention more to do than recognise the inviolability with which the nation had invested the monarch, and dismiss him from the bar accordingly?

The explanation lay here;—that the eloquent orator was hampered and constrained in his reasoning, by the difficulty of reconciling his own conduct, and that of his associates, to the principles which he was now willing to adopt as those that were just and legal. If the person of the King was indeed inviolable, what was to be thought of their consistency, who, by the means of their daring and devoted associates, Barbaroux and Rebecque, had actually brought up the force of Marseillois who led the van, and were, in fact, the efficient and almost the only means by which the palace of that inviolable sovereign was stormed, his guards slaughtered, his person committed to prison, and, finally, his life brought in danger? It was the obvious and personal answer arising out of their own previous manœuvres, the *argumentum ad hominem*, as it is called by logicians, which hung a padlock on the lips of the eloquent Vergniaud, while using the argument which, in itself most just and true, was irreconcilable with the revolutionary measures to which he had been an express party. “Do not evil, that good may come of it,” is a lesson which may be learned, not indeed in the transcendental philosophy which authorizes the acting of instant and admitted wrong, with the view of obtaining some distant, hypothetical, and contingent good; but in the rules of Christian faith and true philosophy, which commands that each case be weighed on its own circumstances, and decided upon the immutable rules of right or wrong, without admitting any subterfuge founded on the hope of remote contingencies and future consequences.

But Vergniaud's oratory was freed from these unhappy trammels, when, with the fervour of a poet, and the inspiration of a prophet, he declaimed against the faction of Jacobins, and announced the consequences of that sanguinary body's ascending to supreme power, by placing their first step on the body of Louis. The picture which he drew of the coming evil seemed too horrible for reality; and yet the scenes which followed even more than realized the predictions of the baffled republican, who saw too late and too clearly the tragic conclusion of the scenes, in which he had borne so active a part.

The appeal to the people, or to the nation, had been argued against by the Jacobin speakers, as opening the nearest road to civil war. Indeed it was one of the many objections to this intermediate and evasive plan, that the people of France, convened in their different bodies, were likely to come to very different conclusions on the King's impeachment. Where the Jacobin clubs were strong and numerous, they would have been sure, according to the maxim of their union, to use the compulsory but ready means of open violence, to disturb the freedom of voting on this important question, and would thus have carried by forcible measures the vote of death. In departments in which Constitutionalists and Royalists had strong interest, it was probable that force would have been repelled by force; and upon the whole, in France, where the law

had been long a dead letter, the arbitrement of the nation on the King's fate must and would have proved a bloody one.

But from that picture which must have followed the success of his party on this memorable occasion, Vergniaud endeavoured to avert the thoughts of his hearers, while he strove to fix them on the crimes and criminal ambition of the Jacobins.

"It is *they* who wish civil war," he exclaimed, "who threaten with daggers the National Convention of France—they who preach in the tribune, and in the market-place, doctrines subversive of all social order. *They* are the men who desire civil war, who accuse Justice of pusillanimity, because she will not strike before conviction—who call common humanity a proof of conspiracy, and accuse all those as traitors to their country who will not join in acts of robbery and assassination—those, in fine, who pervert every sentiment and principle of morality, and by the grossest flatteries endeavour to gain the popular assent and countenance to the most detestable crimes." He dissected the arts of the demagogues in terms equally just and severe. They had been artfully referred to the Temple as the cause of every distress under which the populace laboured; after the death of Louis, which they so eagerly pursued, they would have the same reasons and the same power for directing the odium of every distress or misfortune against the Convention, and making the representatives of France equally obnoxious to the people, as they had now rendered the dethroned King. He concluded with a horrible picture of Paris under the domination of Jacobinism, which was, however, exceeded by the facts that ensued. "To what horrors," he said, "will not Paris be delivered, when she becomes the prey of a horde of desperate assassins? Who will inhabit a city, where Death and Desolation will then fix their court? Who will console the ruined citizen, stripped of the wealth he has honourably acquired, or relieve the wants of his family, which his exertions can no longer supply? Go in that hour of need," he continued, "and ask bread of those who have precipitated you from competence into ruin, and they will answer, 'Hence! dispute with hungry hounds for the carcasses of those we have last murdered—or, if you would drink, here is the blood we have lately shed—other nourishment we have none to afford you!'"

The eloquence of Vergniaud, and the exertions of his associates, were in vain. Barrere, the auxiliary of the Jacobins, though scarcely the partaker of their confidence, drew off as usual many of the timid host of neutrals, by alleging specious reasons, of which the convincing power lay in this, that they must consult their own safety rather than the cause of justice. The appeal to the people, on which the Girondists relied as the means of reprieving rather than saving the King—of giving their consciences the quieting opiate, that he died not by their direct agency—was rejected by four hundred and twenty voices against two hundred and eighty-one. A decisive appeal was made to the Convention on the question, to what punishment the dethroned monarch should be subjected.

The bravos of the Jacobins surrounded the place of meeting on every point of access while this final vote was called, and, to men already affrighted with their situation, added every motive of terror that words, and sometimes acts of violence, could convey. "Think not," they said, "to rob the people of their prey. If you acquit Louis, we go instantly to the Temple to destroy him with his whole family, and we add to his massacre that of all who befriended him." Undoubtedly, among the terrified deputies, there were some moved by these horrible arguments, who conceived that, in giving a vote for Louis's life, they would endanger their own, without saving him. Still, however, among this overawed and trembling band of judges, there were many whose hearts failed them as they reflected on the crime they were about to commit, and who endeavoured to find some evasion stopping short of regicide. Captivity till the

peace was in general proposed as a composition. The philosophic humanity of Condorcet threw in fetters, to make the condition more acceptable to the Jacobins. Others voted for death conditionally. The most intense anxiety prevailed during the vote; and even the banditti in the tribunes suspended their usual howls, and only murmured death to the voter, when the opinion given was for the more lenient punishment. When the Duke of Orleans, who had returned from England on the fall of La Fayette, and sat as a member of the Convention, under the absurd name of Citizen L'Egalité—when this base prince was asked his vote, there was a deep pause; and when the answer proved Death, a momentary horror electrified the auditors. When the voices were numbered, the direct doom was carried by a majority of fifty-three, being the difference between three hundred and eighty-seven and three hundred and thirty-four. The President announced that the doom of DEATH was pronounced against Louis Capet.

Let none, we repeat, dishonour the parallel passage in England's history, by comparing it with this disgraceful act of murder, committed by a few in rabid fury of gain, by the greater part in mere panic and cowardice. That deed, which Algernon Sidney pronounced the bravest and justest ever done in England,—that *facinus tam illustre* of Milton,—was acted by men, from whose principles and feelings we differ entirely; but not more than the ambition of Cromwell differed from that of the blood-thirsty and envious Robespierre, or the political views of Hutchinson and his associates, who acted all in honour, from those of the timid and pedantic Girondists.

The same palsy of the mind which had annihilated the courage of the Convention, pervaded Paris. There was a general feeling for the King's condition, a wish that he might be saved, but which never became strong enough to arise into the resolution to effect his safety. Dumouriez himself came to Paris with all the splendour of a conqueror, whose victory at Jemappes had added Belgium, as Flanders began to be called, to the French nation; and there can be no doubt, that whatever might be his ulterior design, which his situation and character render somewhat doubtful, his purpose was, in the first place, to secure the person of Louis from farther danger or insult. But conqueror as he was, Dumouriez, though more favourably placed than La Fayette had been upon a similar attempt, was far from being, with respect to Paris, in the same independent situation in which Cromwell had been to London, or Cæsar to Rome.

The army with which he had accomplished his victories was yet but half his own. Six Commissioners from the Convention, Danton himself being the principal, had carefully remained at his head-quarters, watching his motions, controlling his power, encouraging the private soldiers of each regiment to hold Jacobin clubs exclusive of the authority of the general, studiously placing in their recollection at every instant, that the doctrines of liberty and equality rendered the soldier to a certain point independent of his commander; and reminding them that they conquered by the command of Dumouriez, indeed, but under the auspices of the Republic, to whom the general, as they themselves, was but a servant and factor. The more absolute the rule of a community, the more do its members enjoy any relaxation of such severe bonds; so that he who can with safety preach a decay of discipline to an army, of which discipline is the very essence, is sure to find willing listeners. A great part of Dumouriez's army was unsettled in their minds by doctrines, which taught an independence of official authority inconsistent with their situation as soldiers, but proper, they were assured, to their quality of citizens.

The manner in which Pache, the minister of war, who, brought into office by Roland, deserted his benefactor to join the Jacobin faction, had conducted his branch of the administration, was so negligent, that it had given ground for serious belief that it was his intention to cripple the resources of the armed force (at whatever risk of national defeat,) in such a manner, that if in their disorganized state Dumouriez had attempted to move them towards Paris for

insuring the safety of Louis, he should find them unfit for such a march. The army had no longer draught-horses for the artillery, and was in want of all with which a regular body of forces should be supplied. Dumouriez, according to his own account, both from the want of equipments of every kind, and from the manner in which the Jacobin Commissioners had enfeebled the discipline of his troops, could not have moved towards Paris without losing the command of the army, and his head to boot, before he had got beyond the frontiers of Belgium.

Dumouriez had detached, however, according to his own statement, a considerable number of officers and confidential persons, to second any enterprise which he might find himself capable of undertaking in the King's behalf. While at Paris, he states that he treated with every faction in turn, attempting even to move Robespierre; and through means of his own intimate friend Gensonné, he renewed his more natural connexions with the Girondists. But the one party were too determined on their bloody object to be diverted from it; the other, disconcerted in viewing the result of their timid and ambiguous attempt to carry through an appeal to the people, saw no further chance of saving the King's life otherwise than by the risk of their own, and chose rather to be executioners than victims.

Among the citizens of Paris, many of whom Dumouriez states himself to have urged with the argument, that the Convention, in assuming the power of judging the King, had exceeded the powers granted to them by the nation, he found hearers, not indeed uninterested or unmoved, but too lukewarm to promise efficient assistance. The citizens were in that state, in which an English poet has said of them,—

“Cold burghers must be struck, and struck like flints,
Ere their hid fire will sparkle.”

With the natural sense of right and justice, they perceived what was expected of them; but felt not the less the trammels of their situation, and hesitated to incur the fury of a popular insurrection, which passiveness on their own part might postpone or avert. They listened to the general with interest, but without enthusiasm; implored him to choose a less dangerous subject of conversation; and spoke of the power of the Jacobins, as of the influence of a tempest, which mortal efforts could not withstand. With one man of worth and confidence, Dumouriez pressed the conversation on the meanness of suffering the city to be governed by two or three thousand banditti, till the citizen looked on the ground and blushed, as he made the degrading confession,—“I see, citizen-general, to what conclusion your argument tends; but we are cowards, and the King must perish. What exertion of spirit can you expect from a city, which, having under arms eighty thousand well-trained militia, suffered themselves, notwithstanding, to be domineered over and disarmed by a comparative handful of rascally Federates from Brest and Marseilles?” The hint was sufficient. Dumouriez, who was involved in much personal danger, desisted from efforts, in which he could only compromise his own safety without insuring that of the King. He affirms, that during twenty days' residence near Paris, he witnessed no effort, either public or private, to avert the King's fate; and that the only feelings which prevailed among the higher classes, were those of consternation and apathy.

It was then especially to be regretted, that an emigration, certainly premature, had drained the country of those fiery and gallant nobles, whose blood would have been so readily ventured in defence of the King. Five hundred men of high character and determined bravery would probably have been seconded by the whole burgher-force of Paris, and might have bid open defiance to the Federates, or, by some sudden and bold attempt, snatched from their hands their intended victim. Five hundred—but five hundred—of those who were winning barren laurels under Condé, or, yet more unhappily, were subsisting on the charity of foreign nations, might at this moment, could they have

been collected in Paris, have accomplished the purpose for which they themselves most desired to live, by saving the life of their unhappy Sovereign. But although powerful reasons, and yet more aggrieved feelings, had recommended the emigration from that country, it operated like the common experiment of the Leyden phial, one side of which being charged with an uncommon quantity of the electrical fluid, has the effect of creating a deficiency of the same essence upon the other. In the interior of France, the spirit of loyalty was at the lowest ebb; because those upon whom it especially acted as a principle, were divided from the rest of the nation, to whom they would otherwise have afforded both encouragement and example.

The sacrifice, therefore, was to be made—made in spite of those who certainly composed the great majority of Paris, at least of such as were capable of reflection,—in spite of the commander of the army, Dumouriez,—in spite of the consciences of the Girondists, who, while they affected an air of republican stoicism, saw plainly, and were fully sensible of the great political error, the great moral sin, they were about to commit.

Undoubtedly they expected, that by joining in, or acquiescing in at least, if not authorising, this unnecessary and wanton cruelty, they should establish their character with the populace as firm and unshaken republicans, who had not hesitated to sacrifice the King, since his life was demanded at the shrine of freedom. They were not long of learning, that they gained nothing by their mean-spirited acquiescence in a crime which their souls must have abhorred. All were sensible that the Girondists had been all along, notwithstanding their theoretical pretensions in favour of a popular government, lingering and looking back with some favour to the dethroned prince, to whose death they only consented in sheer coldness and cowardice of heart, because it required to be defended at some hazard to their own safety. The faults at once of duplicity and cowardice were thus fixed on this party; who, detested by the Royalists, and by all who in any degree harboured opinions favourable to monarchy, had their lives and offices sought after by the whole host of Jacobins in full cry, and that on account of faint-spirited wishes, which they had scarcely dared even to attempt to render efficient.

On the 21st of January 1793, Louis XVI. was publicly beheaded in the midst of his own metropolis, in the *Place Louis Quinze*, erected to the memory of his grandfather. It is possible, for the critical eye of the historian, to discover much weakness in the conduct of this unhappy monarch; for he had neither the determination necessary to fight for his rights, nor the power of submitting with apparent indifference to circumstances, where resistance inferred danger. He submitted, indeed, but with so bad a grace, that he only made himself suspected of cowardice, without getting credit for voluntary concession. But yet his behaviour on many trying occasions effectually vindicated him from the charge of timidity, and showed that the unwillingness to shed blood, by which he was peculiarly distinguished, arose from benevolence, not from pusillanimity.

Upon the scaffold, he behaved with the firmness which became a noble spirit, and the patience becoming one who was reconciled to Heaven. As one of the few marks of sympathy with which his sufferings were softened, the attendance of a confessor, who had not taken the constitutional oath, was permitted to the dethroned monarch. He who undertook the honourable but dangerous office, was a gentleman of the gifted family of Edgeworth of Edgeworthstown; and the devoted zeal with which he rendered the last duties to Louis, had like in the issue to have proved fatal to himself. As the instrument of death descended, the confessor pronounced the impressive words,—“Son of Saint Louis, ascend to Heaven!”

There was a last will of Louis XVI. circulated upon good authority, bearing this remarkable passage:—“I recommend to my son, should he have the misfortune to become King, to recollect that his whole faculties are due to the

service of the public; that he ought to consult the happiness of his people, by governing according to the laws, forgetting all injuries and misfortunes, and in particular those which I may have sustained. But while I exhort him to govern under the authority of the laws, I cannot but add, that this will be only in his power, in so far as he shall be endowed with authority to cause right to be respected, and wrong punished; and that without such authority, his situation in the government must be more hurtful than advantageous to the state."

Not to mingle the fate of the illustrious victims of the royal family with the general tale of the sufferers under the Reign of Terror, we must here mention the deaths of the rest of that illustrious house, which closed for a time a monarchy, that, existing through three dynasties, had given sixty-six kings to France.

It was not to be supposed, that the Queen was to be long permitted to survive her husband. She had been even more than he the object of revolutionary detestation; nay, many were disposed to throw on Marie Antoinette, almost exclusively, the blame of those measures, which they considered as counter-revolutionary. She came to France a gay, young, and beautiful Princess—she found in her husband a faithful, affectionate, almost an uxorious husband. In the early years of her reign she was guilty of two faults.

In the first place, she dispensed too much with court-etiquette, and wished too often to enjoy a retirement and freedom, inconsistent with her high rank and the customs of the court. This was a great though natural mistake. The etiquette of a court places round the great personages whom it regards, a close and troublesome watch, but that very guard acts as a barrier against calumny; and when these formal witnesses are withdrawn, evil tongues are never wanting to supply with infamous reports a blank, which no testimony can be brought to fill up with the truth. No individual suffered more than Marie Antoinette from this species of slander, which imputed the most scandalous occupations to hours that were only meant to be stolen from form and from state, and devoted to the ease which crowned heads ought never to dream of enjoying.

Another natural, yet equally false step, was her interfering more frequently with politics than became her sex; exhibiting thus her power over the King, and at the same time lowering him in the eyes of his subjects, who, whatever be the auspices under which their own domestic affairs are conducted, are always scandalized if they see, or think they see, anything like female influence directing the councils of their sovereigns. We are uncertain what degree of credit is to be given to the Memoirs of Bezenval, but we believe they approach near the truth in representing the Queen as desirous of having a party of her own, and carrying points in opposition to the ministers; and we know that a general belief of this sort was the first foundation of the fatal report, that an Austrian cabal existed in the Court of France, under the direction of the Queen, which was supposed to sacrifice the interests of France to favour those of the Emperor of Germany.

The terms of her accusation were too basely depraved to be even hinted at here. She scorned to reply to it, but appealed to all who had been mothers, against the very possibility of the horrors which were stated against her. The widow of a King, the sister of an Emperor, was condemned to death, dragged in an open tumbril to the place of execution, and beheaded on the 16th October 1793. She suffered death in her 39th year.

The Princess Elizabeth, sister of Louis, of whom it might be said, in the words of Lord Clarendon, that she resembled a chapel in a King's palace, into which nothing but piety and morality enter, while all around is filled with sin, idleness, and folly, did not, by the most harmless demeanour and inoffensive character, escape the miserable fate in which the Jacobins had determined to involve the whole family of Louis XVI. Part of the accusation redounded to the honour of her character. She was accused of having admitted to the apartments of the Tuilleries some of the National Guards, of the section of

Filles de Saint Thomas, and causing the wounds to be looked to which they had received in a skirmish with the Marseillois, immediately before the 10th of August. The princess admitted her having done so, and it was exactly in consistence with her whole conduct. Another charge stated the ridiculous accusation, that she had distributed bullets chewed by herself and her attendants, to render them more fatal, to the defenders of the Castle of the Tuilleries; a ridiculous fable, of which there was no proof whatever. She was beheaded in May 1794, and met her death as became the manner in which her life had been spent.

We are weary of recounting these atrocities, as others must be of reading them. Yet it is not useless that men should see how far human nature can be carried, in contradiction to every feeling the most sacred, to every pleading whether of justice or of humanity. The Dauphin we have already described as a promising child of seven years old, an age at which no offence could have been given, and from which no danger could have been apprehended. Nevertheless, it was resolved to destroy the innocent child, and by means to which ordinary murders seem deeds of mercy.

The unhappy boy was put in charge of the most hard-hearted villain whom the Community of Paris, well acquainted where such agents were to be found, were able to select from their band of Jacobins. This wretch, a shoemaker called Simon, asked his employers, "what was to be done with the young wolf-whelp; Was he to be slain?"—"No."—"Poisoned?"—"No."—"Starved to death?"—"No."—"What then?"—"He was to be got rid of." Accordingly, by a continuance of the most severe treatment—by beating, cold, vigils, fasts, and ill usage of every kind, so frail a blossom was soon blighted. He died on the 8th June 1795.

After this last horrible crime, there was a relaxation in favour of the daughter, and now the sole child, of this unhappy house. The Princess Royal, whose qualities have since honoured even her birth and blood, experienced from this period a mitigated captivity. Finally, on the 19th December 1795, this last remaining relic of the family of Louis was permitted to leave her prison and her country, in exchange for La Fayette and others, whom, on that condition, Austria delivered from captivity. She became afterwards the wife of her cousin the Duke d'Angouleme, eldest son of the reigning monarch of France, and obtained, by the manner in which she conducted herself at Bourdeaux in 1815, the highest praise for gallantry and spirit.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dumouriez—His displeasure at the Treatment of the Flemish Provinces by the Convention—His Projects in consequence—Gains the ill-will of his Army—and is forced to fly to the Austrian Camp—Lives many years in retreat, and finally dies in England.—Struggles betwixt the Girondists and Jacobins in the Convention.—Robespierre impeaches the Leaders of the Girondists—and is denounced by them.—Decree of Accusation past against Marat, who conceals himself.—Commission of Twelve appointed.—Marat acquitted, and sent back to the Convention with a Civic Crown.—Terror and Indecision of the Girondists.—Jacobins prepare to attack the Palais Royal, but are Repulsed—Repair to the Convention, who recall the Commission of Twelve.—Louvet and other Girondist Leaders fly from Paris.—Convention go forth in Procession to Expostulate with the People—Forced back to their Hall, and compelled to Decree the Accusation of Thirty of their Body.—Girondists finally Ruined—and their Principal Leaders perish in Prison, by the Guillotine, and by Famine.—Close of their History.

WHILE the Republic was thus indulging the full tyranny of irresistible success over the remains of the royal family, it seemed about to sustain a severe shock from one of its own children, who had arisen to eminence by its paths. This was Dumouriez, whom we left victor at Jemappes, and conqueror, in consequence, of the Flemish provinces. These fair possessions, the Convention, without a moment's hesitation, annexed to the dominions of France; and proceeded to pour down upon them their tax-gatherers, commissaries, and every other denomination of spoilers, who not only robbed without ceremony the unfortunate inhabitants, but insulted their religion by pillaging and defacing their churches, set their laws and privileges at contempt, and tyrannized over them in the very manner, which had so recently induced the Flemings to offer resistance to their own hereditary princes of the House of Austria.

Dumouriez, naturally proud of his conquest, felt for those who had surrendered to his arms upon assurance of being well treated, and was sensible that his own honour and influence were aimed at; and that it was the object of the Convention to make use of his abilities only as their implements, and to keep his army in a state of complete dependence upon themselves.

The general, on the contrary, had the ambition as well as the talents of a conqueror; he considered his army as the means of attaining the victories, which, without him, they could not have achieved, and he desired to retain it under his own immediate command, as a combatant wishes to keep hold of the sword which he has wielded with success. He accounted himself strongly possessed of the hearts of his soldiers, and therefore thought himself qualified to play the part of military umpire in the divisions of the state, which La Fayette had attempted in vain; and it was with this view, doubtless, that he undertook that expedition to Paris, in which he vainly attempted a mediation in behalf of the King.

After leaving Paris, Dumouriez seems to have abandoned Louis personally to his fate, yet still retaining hopes to curb the headlong course of the Revolution.

Two plans presented themselves to his fertile invention, nor can it be known with certainty to which he most inclined. He may have entertained the idea of prevailing upon the army to decide for the youthful Dauphin to be their Constitutional King; or, as many have thought, it may better have suited his personal views to have recommended to the throne a gallant young prince of the blood, who had distinguished himself in his army, the eldest son of the miserable Duke of Orleans. Such a change of dynasty might be supposed to

limit the wishes of the proposed sovereign to that share of power intrusted to him by the Revolution, since he would have had no title to the crown save what arose from the Constitution. But, to qualify himself in either case to act as the supreme head of the army, independent of the National Convention, it was necessary that Dumouriez should pursue his conquests, act upon the plan laid down by the ministers at Paris, and in addition to his title of victor in Belgium, add that of conqueror of Holland. He commenced, accordingly, an invasion of the latter country, with some prospect of success. But though he took Gertruydenberg, and blockaded Bergen-op-Zoom, he was repulsed from Williamstadt; and at the same time he received information that an army of Austrians, under the Prince of Saxe-Coburg, a general of eminence, though belonging to the old military school of Germany, was advancing into Flanders. Dumouriez retreated from Holland to make a stand against these new enemies, and was again unfortunate. The French were defeated at Aix-la-Chapelle, and their new levies almost entirely dispersed. Chagrined with this disaster, Dumouriez gave an imprudent loose to the warmth of his temper. Following the false step of La Fayette, in menacing before he was prepared to strike, he wrote a letter to the Convention, threatening the Jacobin party with the indignation of his army. This was on the 12th March 1793, and six days afterwards he was again defeated in the battle of Neerwinden.

It must have been extremely doubtful, whether, in the very pitch of victory, Dumouriez possessed enough of individual influence over his army, to have inclined them to declare against the National Convention. The forces which he commanded were not to be regarded in the light of a regular army, long embodied, and engaged perhaps for years in difficult enterprises, and in foreign countries, where such a force exists as a community only by their military relations to each other; where the common soldiers know no other home than their tents, and no other direction than the voice of their officers; and the officers no other laws than the pleasure of the general. Such armies, holding themselves independent of the civil authorities of their country, came at length, through the habit of long wars and distant conquests, to exist in the French empire, and upon such rested the foundation-stone of the Imperial throne; but as yet, the troops of the Republic consisted either of the regiments revolutionized, when the great change had offered commissions to privates, and batons to subalterns, or of new levies, who had their very existence through the Revolution, and whose common nickname of Carmagnols, expressed their Republican origin and opinions. Such troops might obey the voice of the general on the actual field of battle, but were not very amenable even to the ordinary course of discipline elsewhere, and were not likely to exchange their rooted political principles, with all the ideas of license connected with them, at Dumouriez's word of command, as they would have changed their front, or have adopted any routine military movement. Still less were they likely implicitly to obey this commander, when the *prestige* of his fortune seemed in the act of abandoning him, and least of all, when they found him disposed to make a compromise with the very foe who had defeated him, and perceived that he negotiated, by abandoning his conquests to the Austrians, to purchase the opportunity or permission of executing the counter-revolution which he proposed.

Nevertheless, Dumouriez, either pushed on by an active and sanguine temper, or being too far advanced to retreat, endeavoured, by intrigues in his own army, and an understanding with the Prince of Saxe-Coburg, to render himself strong enough to upset the reigning party in the Convention, and restore, with some modifications, the Constitution of 1791. He expressed this purpose with imprudent openness. Several generals of division declared against his scheme. He failed in obtaining possession of the fortresses of Lisle, Valenciennes, and Condé. Another act of imprudence aggravated the unpopularity into which he began to fall with his army. Four Commissioners of the Convention re-

monstrated publicly on the course he was pursuing. Dumouriez, not contented with arresting them, had the imprudence to send them to the camp of the Austrians prisoners, thus delivering up to the public enemy the representatives of the government under which he was appointed, and for which he had hitherto acted, and proclaiming his alliance with the invaders whom he was commissioned to oppose.

All this rash conduct disunited the tie between Dumouriez and his army. The resistance to his authority became general, and finally, it was with great difficulty and danger that he made his escape to the Austrian camp, with his young friend the Duke de Chartres.

All that this able and ambitious man saved in his retreat was merely his life, of which he spent some years afterwards in Germany, concluding it in England about 1822, without again making any figure in the political horizon.* Thus, the attempt of Dumouriez, to use military force to stem the progress of the Revolution, failed, like that of La Fayette some months before. To use a medical simile, the imposthume was not yet far enough advanced, and sufficiently come to a head, to be benefited by the use of the lancet.

Meanwhile, the Convention, though triumphant over the schemes of the revolted general, was divided by the two parties to whom its walls served for an arena, in which to aim against each other the most deadly blows. It was now manifest that the strife must end tragically for one of the parties, and all circumstances pointed out the Girondists as the victims. They had indeed still the command of majorities in the Convention, especially when the votes were taken by scrutiny or ballot; on which occasions the feebler deputies of the Plain could give their voice according to their consciences, without its being known that they had done so. But in open debate, and when the members voted *visa voce*, amongst the intimidating cries and threats of tribunes filled by an infuriated audience, the spirit of truth and justice seemed too nearly allied to that of martyrdom, to be prevalent generally amongst men who made their own safety the rule of their political conduct. The party, however, continued for several months to exercise the duties of administration, and to make such a struggle in the Convention as could be achieved by oratory and reasoning, against underhand intrigue, supported by violent declamation, and which was, upon the least signal, sure of the aid of actual brutal violence.

The Girondists, we have seen, had aimed decrees of the Assembly at the triumvirate, and a plot was now laid among the Jacobins, to repay that intended distinction by the actual strokes of the axe, or, failing that, of the dagger.

When the news of Dumouriez's defection arrived, the Jacobins, always alert in prepossessing the public mind, held out the Girondists as the associates of the revolted general. It was on them whom they directed the public animosity, great and furious in proportion to the nature of the crisis. That majority of the Convention, whom the traitor Dumouriez affirmed was sound, and with which he acted in concert, intimated, according to the Jacobins, the Girondists the allies of his treasons. They called out in the Convention, on the 8th of March, for a tribunal of judgment fit to decide on such crimes, without the delays arising from ordinary forms of pleading and evidence, and without even the intervention of a jury. The Girondists opposed this measure, and the debate was violent. In the course of the subsequent days, an insurrection of the people was prepared by the Jacobins, as upon the 20th June and 10th of August. It ought to have broken out upon the 10th of March, which was the day destined to put an end to the ministerial party by a general massacre. But the Girondists received early intelligence of what was intended, and absented themselves from the Convention on the day of peril. A body of Federates from Brest,

* Dumouriez was a man of pleasing manners and lively conversation. He lived in retirement, near Ealing, in Middlesex, and died only within these last two or three years.

about 400 strong, were also detached in their favour by Kevelagan, one of the deputies from the ancient province of Bretagne, and who was a zealous Girondist. The precaution, however slight, was sufficient for the time. The men who were prepared to murder, were unwilling to fight, however strong the odds on their side; and the mustering of the Jacobin bravos proved, on this occasion, an empty menace.

Duly improved, a discovered conspiracy is generally of advantage to the party against which it was framed. But Vergniaud, when, in a subsequent sitting, he denounced to the Convention the existence of a conspiracy to put to death a number of the deputies, was contented to impute it to the influence of the aristocracy, of the nobles, the priests, and the emissaries of Pitt and Coburg; thus suffering the Jacobins to escape every imputation of that blame, which all the world knew attached to them, and to them only. He was loudly applauded. Marat, who rose after him, was applauded as loudly, and the Revolutionary Tribunal was established.

Louvet, who exclaims against Vergniaud for his pusillanimity, says, that the orator alleged in his excuse, "the danger of incensing violent men, already capable of all excesses." They had come to the boar-chase, they had roused him and provoked his anger, and now they felt, too late, that they lacked weapons with which to attack the irritated monster. The plot of the 10th March had been compared to that of the Catholics on the 5th November, in England. It had been described in the *Moniteur* as a horrible conspiracy, by which a company of ruffians, assuming the title of *de la Glaciere*, in remembrance of the massacre of Avignon, surrounded the hall for two days, with the purpose of dissolving the National Convention by force, and putting to death a great proportion of the deputies. Yet the Convention passed over, without effective prosecution of any kind, a crime of so enormous a die; and in doing so, showed themselves more afraid of immediate personal consequences, than desirous of seizing an opportunity to rid France of the horrible faction by whom they were scourged and menaced.

In the midst of next month the Jacobins became the assailants, proud, it may be supposed, of the impunity under which they had been sheltered. Robespierre impeached by name the leaders of the Girondists, as accomplices of Dumouriez. But it was not in the Convention where Robespierre's force lay. Guadet, with great eloquence, repelled the charge, and in his turn denounced Robespierre and the Jacobins. He proclaimed to the Convention that they sat and debated under raised sabres and poniards, which a moment's signal could let loose on them; and he read from the *Journal* conducted by Marat, an appeal, calling on the people to rise in insurrection. Fear and shame gave the Convention momentary courage. They passed a decree of accusation against Marat, who was obliged to conceal himself for a few days.

Buzot, it may be remarked, censures this decree against Marat as impolitic, seeing it was the first innovation affecting the inviolability of the persons of the deputies. In point of principle he is certainly right; but as to any practical effects resulting from this breach of privilege, by reprisals on the other side, we are quite sceptical. Whatever violence was done to the Girondists, at the end of the conflict, was sure to have befallen them, whether Marat had been arrested or not. Precedents were as useless to such men, as a vizard to one of their ruffians. Both could do their business barefaced.

The Convention went farther than the decree of accusation against Marat; and for the first time showed their intention to make a stand against the Jacobins. They nominated a commission of Twelve Members, some Girondists, some neutrals, to watch over and repress the movements of such citizens as should seem disposed to favour anarchy.

The Convention were not long of learning the character of the opposition which they had now defied. Pache, Mayor of Paris, and one of the worst men

of the Revolution, appeared at the bar of the Convention with two thousand petitioners, as they were called. They demanded, in the name of the sections, the arrest of twenty-two of the most distinguished of the Girondist leaders. The Convention got rid of the petition by passing to the order of the day. But the courage of the anarchists was greatly increased; and they saw that they had only to bear down with repeated attacks an enemy who had no fortification save the frail defences of the law, which it was the pride of the Jacobins to surmount and to defy. Their demand of proscription against these unfortunate deputies was a measure from which they never departed; and their audacity in urging it placed that party on the defensive, who ought, in all reason, to have been active in the attack.

The Girondists, however, felt the extremity to which they were reduced, and sensible of the great advantage to be attained by being the assailants in such a struggle, they endeavoured to regain the offensive.

The Revolutionary Tribunal to which Marat had been sent by the decree of accusation, knew their business too well to convict any one, much less such a distinguished patriot, who was only accused of stimulating the people to exercise the sacred right of insurrection. He was honourably acquitted, after scarcely the semblance of a trial, and brought back to his place in the Convention, crowned with a civic coronet, and accompanied by a band of such determined ruffians as were worthy to form his body-guard. They insisted on filing through the hall, while a huge pioneer, their spokesman, assured the Convention that the people loved Marat, and that the cause of Marat and the people would always be the same.

Meanwhile, the Committee of Twelve proceeded against the Terrorists with some vigour. One of the most furious provokers of insurrection and murder was Hebert, a devoted Jacobin, substitute of the Procureur Syndic of the Community. Speaking to this body, who now exercised the whole powers of magistracy in Paris, this man had not blushed to demand the heads of three hundred deputies. He was arrested and committed to prison.

This decisive action ought in policy to have been followed by other steps equally firm. The Girondists, by displaying confidence, might surely have united to themselves a large number of the neutral party; and might have established an interest in the sections of Paris, consisting of men, who, though timid without leaders, held in deep horror the revolutionary faction, and trembled for their families and their property, if put under the guardianship, as it had been delicately expressed, of the rabble of the faubourgs. The very show of four hundred Bretons had disconcerted the whole conspiracy of the 10th of March; and therefore, with a moderate support of determined men, statesmen of a more resolute and practised character than these theoretical philosophers, might have bid defiance to the mere mob of Paris, aided by a few hundreds of hired ruffians. At the worst they would have perished in attempting to save their country from the most vile and horrible tyranny.

The Girondists, however, sat in the Convention, like wild-fowl when the hawk is abroad, afraid either to remain where they were, or to attempt a flight. Yet, as they could make no armed interest in Paris, there was much to induce them to quit the metropolis, and seek a place of free deliberation elsewhere. France, indeed, was in such a state, that had these unfortunate experimentalists possessed any influence in almost any department, they could hardly have failed to bring friends around them, if they had effected a retreat to it. Versailles seems to have been thought of as the scene of their adjournment, by those who nourished such an idea; and it was believed that the inhabitants of that town, repentant of the part they had played in driving from them the royal family and the Legislative Body, would have stood in their defence. But neither from the public journals and histories of the time, nor from the private memoirs of Buzot, Barbaroux, or Louvet, does it appear that these infatuated philosophers thought

either of flight or defence. They appear to have resembled the wretched animal, whose chance of escape from its enemies rests only in the pitiful cries which it utters when seized. Their whole system was a castle in the air, and when it vanished they could only sit down and lament over it. On the other hand, it must be allowed to the Girondists, that the inefficiency and imbecility of their conduct was not to be attributed to personal cowardice. Enthusiasts in their political opinions, they saw their ruin approaching, waited for it, and dared it; but like that of the monarch they had been so eager to dethrone, and by dethroning whom they had made way for their own ruin, their resolution was of a passive, not an active character; patient and steady to endure wrong, but inefficient where the object was to do right towards themselves and France.

For many nights these unhappy and devoted deputies, still possessed of the ministerial power, were so far from being able to ensure their own safety, or that of the country under their nominal government, that they had shifted about from one place of rendezvous to another, not daring to occupy their own lodgings, and usually remaining, three or four together, armed for defence of their lives, in such places of secrecy and safety as they could devise.

It was on the night preceding the 30th of May, that Louvet, with five of the most distinguished of the Girondist party, had absconded into such a retreat, more like robbers afraid of the police than legislators, when the tocsin was rung at dead of night. Rabaud de Saint Etienne, a Protestant clergyman, and one of the most distinguished of the party for humanity and resolution, received it as a death-knell, and continued to repeat, *Illu suprema dies*.

The alarm was designed to raise the suburbs; but in this task the Jacobins do not seem to have had the usual facilities—at least they began by putting their bloodhounds on a scent, upon which they thought them likely to run more readily than the mere murder or arrest of twenty or thirty deputies of the Convention. They devised one which suited admirably, both to alarm the wealthier citizens, and teach them to be contented with looking to their own safety, and to animate the rabble with the hope of plunder. The rumour was spread, that the section of La Butte-des-Moulins, comprehending the Palais Royal, and the most wealthy shops in Paris, had become counter-revolutionary—had displayed the white cockade, and were declaring for the Bourbons.

Of this not a word was true. The citizens of the Palais Royal were disposed perhaps to royalty—certainly for a quiet and established government—but loved their own shops much better than the House of Bourbon, and had no intention of placing them in jeopardy either for king or kaiser. They heard with alarm the accusation against them, mustered in defence of their property, shut the gates of the Palais Royal, which admits of being strongly defended, turned cannon with lighted matches upon the mob as they approached their precincts, and showed, in a way sufficient to intimidate the rabble of Saint Antoine, that though the wealthy burgesses of Paris might abandon to the mob the care of killing kings and changing ministries, they had no intention whatsoever to yield up to them the charge of their counters and tills. Five sections were under arms and ready to act. Not one of the Girondist party seems to have even attempted to point out to them, that by an exertion to preserve the independence of the Convention, they might rid themselves for ever of the domination, under which all who had property, feeling, or education, were rendered slaves by these recurring insurrections. This is the more extraordinary, as Raffé, the commandant of the section of La Butte-des-Moulins, had actually marched to the assistance of the Convention on the 10th of March, then, as now, besieged by an armed force.

Left to themselves, the sections who were in arms to protect order, thought it enough to provide against the main danger of the moment. The sight of their array, and of their determined appearance, far more than their three-coloured cockades, and cries of "Vive la Republique," were sufficient to make

the insurgents recognize those as good citizens, who could not be convicted of *incivism* without a bloody combat.

They were, however, at length made to comprehend by their leaders, that the business to be done lay in the Hall of the Convention, and that the exertions of each active citizen were to entitle him to forty *sous* for the day's work. In the whole affair there was so much of cold trick, and so little popular enthusiasm, that it is difficult to believe that the plotters might not have been countermined and blown to the moon with their own petard, had there been active spirit or practical courage on the side of those who were the assailed party. But we see no symptoms of either. The Convention were surrounded by the rabble, and menaced in the grossest terms. Under the general terror inspired by their situation, they finally recalled the Commission of Twelve, and set Hebert at liberty;—concessions which, though short of those which the Jacobins had determined to insist upon, were such as showed that the power of the Girondists was entirely destroyed, and that the Convention itself might be overawed at the pleasure of whomsoever should command the mob of Paris.

The Jacobins were now determined to follow up their blow, by destroying the enemy whom they had disarmed. The 2d of June was fixed for this purpose. Louvet, and some others of the Girondist party, did not choose to await the issue, but fled from Paris. To secure the rest of the devoted party, the barriers of the city were shut.

On this decisive occasion the Jacobins had not trusted entirely to the efficiency of their suburb forces. They had also under their orders about two thousand Federates, who were encamped in the Champs Elysées, and had been long tutored in the part they had to act. They harnessed guns and howitzers, prepared grape-shot and shells, and actually heated shot red-hot, as if their purpose had been to attack some strong fortress, instead of a hall filled with the unarmed representatives of the people. Henriot, commander-general of the armed force of Paris, a fierce, ignorant man, entirely devoted to the Jacobin interest, took care, in posting the armed force which arrived from all hands around the Convention, to station those nearest to the Legislative Body, whose dispositions with regard to them were most notoriously violent. They were thus entirely surrounded as if in a net, and the Jacobins had little more to do than to select their victims.

The universal cry of the armed men who surrounded the Convention, was for a decree of death or outlawry against twenty-two members of the Girondist party, who had been pointed out, by the petition of Pache, and by subsequent petitions of the most inflammatory nature, as accomplices of Dumouriez, enemies of the good city of Paris, and traitors, who meditated a federative instead of an indivisible Republic. This list of proscription included the ministers.

The Convention were in a dreadful situation; it was manifest that the arm of strong force was upon them. Those who were supposed to belong to the Girondist party, were struck and abused as they entered the hall, hooted and threatened as they arose to deliver their opinion. The members were no longer free to speak or vote. There could be no deliberation within the Assembly, while such a scene of tumult and fury continued and increased without.

Barrere, leader, as we have said, of the Plain, or neutral party, who thought with the Girondists in conscience, and acted with the Jacobins in fear, proposed one of those seemingly moderate measures, which involve as sure destruction to those who adopt them, as if their character were more decisively hostile. With compliments to their good intentions, with lamentations for the emergency, he entreated the proscribed Girondists to sacrifice themselves, as the unhappy subjects of disunion in the Republic, and to resign their character of deputies. The Convention, he said, would then declare them under the protection of the law,—as if they were not invested with that protection while they were convicted of no crime, and clothed at the same time with the inviolability, of which

he advised them to divest themselves. It was as if a man were requested to lay aside his armour, on the promise that the ordinary garments which he wore under it should be rendered impenetrable.

But a Frenchman is easily induced to do that to which he is provoked, as involving a point of honour. This treacherous advice was adopted by Isnard, Dussaux, and others of the proscribed deputies, who were thus persuaded to abandon what defences remained to them, in hopes to soften the ferocity of an enemy, too inveterate to entertain feelings of generosity.

Lanjuinais maintained a more honourable struggle. "Expect not from me," he said to the Convention, "to hear either of submission, or resignation of my official character. Am I free to offer such a resignation, or are you free to receive it?" As he would have turned his eloquence against Robespierre and the Jacobins, an attempt was made by Legendre and Chabot to drag him from the tribune. While he resisted he received several blows. "Cruel men!" he exclaimed—"The Heathens adorned and caressed the victims whom they led to the slaughter—you load them with blows and insult."

Shame procured him a moment's hearing, during which he harangued the Assembly with much effect on the baseness, treachery, cruelty, and impolicy, of thus surrendering their brethren to the call of a blood-thirsty multitude from without, stimulated by a vengeful minority of their own members. The Convention made an effort to free themselves from the toils in which they were entangled. They resolved to go out in a body, and ascertain what respect would be paid to their persons by the armed force assembled around them.

They sallied forth accordingly, in procession, into the gardens of the Tuilleries, the Jacobins alone remaining in the Hall; but their progress was presently arrested by Henriot, at the head of a strong military staff, and a large body of troops. Every passage leading from the gardens was secured by soldiers. The President read the decree of the Assembly, and commanded Henriot's obedience. The commandant of Paris only replied by reining back his horse, and commanding the troops to stand to their arms. "Return to your posts," he said to the terrified legislators; "the people demand the traitors who are in the bosom of your Assembly, and will not depart till their will is accomplished." Marat came up presently afterwards at the head of a select band of a hundred ruffians. He called on the multitude to stand firm to their purpose, and commanded the Convention, in the name of the people, to return to their place of meeting, to deliberate, and, above all, to obey.

The Convention re-entered their Hall in the last degree of consternation, prepared to submit to the infamy which now seemed inevitable, yet loathing themselves for their cowardice, even while obeying the dictates of self-preservation. The Jacobins meanwhile enhanced their demand, like Her who sold the books of the Sibyls. Instead of twenty-two deputies, the accusation of thirty was now demanded. Amid terror mingled with acclamations, the decree was declared to be carried. This doom of proscription passed on the motion of Couthon; a decrepid being, whose lower extremities were paralysed,—whose benevolence of feeling seemed to pour itself out in the most gentle expressions, uttered in the most melodious tones,—whose sensibility led him constantly to foster a favourite spaniel in his bosom, that he might have something on which to bestow kindness and caresses,—but who was at heart as fierce as Danton, and as pitiless as Robespierre.

Great part of the Convention did not join in this vote, protesting loudly against the force imposed on them. Several of the proscribed deputies were arrested, others escaped from the Hall by the connivance of their brethren, and of the official persons attached to the Convention, some, foreseeing their fate, had absented themselves from the meeting, and were already fled from Paris.

Thus fell, without a blow struck, or sword drawn in their defence, the party in the Convention which claimed the praise of acting upon pure Republican

principles—who had overthrown the throne, and led the way to anarchy, merely to perfect an ideal theory. They fell, as the wisest of them admitted, dupes to their own system, and to the vain and impracticable idea of ruling a large and corrupt empire, by the motives which may sway a small and virtuous community. They might, as they too late discovered, have as well attempted to found the Capitol on a bottomless and quaking marsh, as their pretended Republic in a country like France. The violent revolutionary expedients, the means by which they acted, were turned against them by men, whose ends were worse than their own. The Girondists had gloried in their share of the triumphs of the 10th of August; yet what was that celebrated day, save an insurrection of the populace against the constituted authority of the time, as those of the 31st of May and 2d of June 1793, under which the Girondists succumbed, were directed against them as successors in the government? In the one case, a King was dethroned; in the other, a government or band of ministers dismissed. And if the people had a right, as the Girondists claimed in their behalf, to act as the executioners of their own will in the one instance, it is difficult to see upon what principle their power should be trammelled in the other.

In the important process against the King, the Girondists had shown themselves pusillanimous;—desirous to save the life of a guiltless man, they dared not boldly vouch his innocence, but sheltered themselves under evasions which sacrificed his character, while they could not protect his life. After committing this great error, they lost every chance of rallying with efficacy under their standard what might remain of well-intentioned individuals in Paris and in France, who, if they had seen the Girondists, when in power, conduct themselves with firmness, would probably rather have ranked themselves in the train of men who were friends to social order, however republican their tenets, than have given way to the anarchy which was doomed to ensue.

Upon all their own faults, whether of act or of omission, the unfortunate Girondists had now ample time to meditate. Twenty-two of their leading members, arrested on the fatal 2d of June, already waited their doom in prison, while the others wandered on, in distress and misery, through the different departments of France.

The fate of those who were prisoners was not very long suspended. In about three months they were brought to trial, and convicted—of *Royalism*! Such was the temper of France at the time, and so gross the impositions which might be put upon the people, that the men in the empire, who, upon abstract principle, were most averse to monarchy, and who had sacrificed even their consciences to join with the Jacobins in pulling down the throne, were now accused and convicted of being Royalists; and that at a time when what remained of the royal family was at so low an ebb, that the imprisoned Queen could not obtain the most ordinary book for the use of her son, without a direct and formal application to the Community of Paris.*

When the Girondists were brought before the tribunal, the people seem to have shown more interest in men, whose distinguished talents had so often swayed the Legislative Body, than was altogether acceptable to the Jacobins, who were induced to fear some difficulty in carrying through their conviction. They obtained a decree from the Convention, declaring that the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal should be at liberty to close the procedure so soon as the Jury should have made up their minds, and without hearing the accused in their defence. This frightful expedient of cutting short the debate, (*couper la parole* was the phrase,) was often resorted to on those revolutionary trials. Unquestionably, they dreaded the reasoning of Brissot, and the eloquence of Vergniaud, of which they had so long and so often experienced the thunders.

* Witness the following entry in the minutes of the *Commune*, on a day, be it remarked, betwixt the 29th May and the 2d June: "Antoinette fait demander pour son fils le roman de Gil Blas de Santillane—accordé."

One crime,—and it was a fatal offence, considering before what judicature they stood,—seems to have been made out by Brissot's own letters. It was that by which the late members attempted to effect a combination among the departments, for the purpose of counterpoising, if possible, the tremendous influence which the capital and the revolutionary part of its magistracy exercised over the Convention, whom Paris detained prisoners within her walls. This delinquency alone was well calculated to remove all scruples from the minds of a jury, selected from that very class of Parisians, whose dreadful importance would have been altogether annihilated by the success of such a scheme. The accused were found guilty as conspirators against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, and the liberty and safety of the French people.

When the sentence of death was pronounced, one of their number, Valazé, plunged a dagger in his bosom. The rest suffered in terms of the sentence, and were conveyed to the place of execution in the same tumbril with the bloody corpse of their suicide colleague. Brissot seemed downcast and unhappy. Fauchet, a renegade priest, showed signs of remorse. The rest affected a Roman resolution, and went to execution singing a parody on the Hymn of the Marseillois, in which that famous composition was turned against the Jacobins. They had long rejected the aids of religion, which, early received and cherished, would have guided their steps in prosperity, and sustained them in adversity. Their remaining stay was only that of the same vain and speculative philosophy, which had so deplorably influenced their political conduct.

Those members of the Girondist party, who, escaping from Paris to the departments, avoided their fate somewhat longer, saw little reason to pride themselves on the political part they had chosen to act. They found the eastern and southern departments in a ferment against Paris and the Jacobins, and ready to rise in arms; but they became aware, at the same time, that no one was thinking of or regretting their system of a pure republic, the motives by which the malcontents were agitated being of a very different, and far more practical character. Great part of the nation, all at least of better feelings, had been deeply affected by the undeserved fate of the King, and the cruelty with which his family had been, and were still treated. The rich feared to be pillaged and murdered by the Jacobins; the poor suffered no less under scarcity of grain, under the depreciation of assignats, and a compulsory levy of no less than three hundred thousand men over France, to supply the enormous losses of the French army. But everywhere the insurrections took a Royalist, and not a Republican character; and although the Girondists were received at Caen and elsewhere with compassion and respect, the votes they had given in the King's trial, and their fanatic zeal for a kind of government for which France was totally unfitted, and which those from whom they obtained refuge were far from desiring, prevented their playing any distinguished part in the disturbed districts of the West.

Buzot seems to see this in the true sense. "It is certain," he says, "that if we could have rested our pretensions upon having wished to establish in France a moderate government of that character, which, according to many well-instructed persons, best suited the people of France," (indicating a limited monarchy,) "we might have entertained hopes of forming a formidable coalition in the department of Calvados, and rallying around us all whom ancient prejudices attached to royalty." As it was, they were only regarded as a few enthusiasts, whom the example of America had induced to attempt the establishment of a republic, in a country where all hopes and wishes, save those of the Jacobins, and the vile rabble whom they courted and governed, were turned towards a moderate monarchy. Buzot also observed, that the many violences and atrocities, forced levies, and other acts of oppression practised in the name of the Republic, had disgusted men with a form of government, where cruelty seemed to rule over misery by the sole aid of terror. With more candour than some of his companions, he avows his error, and admits that he would, at this

closing scene, have willingly united with the moderate monarchists, to establish royalty under the safeguard of constitutional restraints.

Several of the deputies, Louvet, Riouffe, Barbaroux, Pethion, and others, united themselves with a body of Royalists of Bretagne, to whom General Wimpfen had given something of the name of an army, but which never attained the solidity of one. It was defeated at Vernon, and never afterwards could be again assembled.

The proscribed deputies, at first with a few armed associates, afterwards entirely deserted, wandered through the country, incurring some romantic adventures, which have been recorded by the pen of their historian, Louvet. At length, six of the party succeeded in obtaining the means of transportation to Bourdeaux, the capital of that Gironde from which their party derived its name, and which those who were natives of it, remembering only the limited society in which they had first acquired their fame, had described as possessing and cherishing the purest principles of philosophical freedom. Guadet had protested to his companions in misfortune a thousand times, that if liberal, honourable, and generous sentiments were chased from every other corner of France, they were nevertheless sure to find refuge in *La Gironde*. The proscribed wanderers had well nigh kissed the land of refuge, when they disembarked, as in a country of assured protection. But Bourdeaux was by this time no more than a wealthy trading town, where the rich, trembling before the poor, were not willing to increase their own imminent danger, by intermeddling with the misfortunes of others. All doors, or nearly so, of La Gironde itself, were shut against the Girondists, and they wandered outcasts in the country, suffering every extremity of toil and hunger, and bringing, in some cases, death upon the friends who ventured to afford them refuge.

Louvet alone escaped, of the six Girondists who took refuge in their own peculiar province. Guadet, Salles, and the enthusiastic Barbaroux, were seized and executed at Bourdeaux, but not till the last had twice attempted suicide with his pistols. Buzot and Pethion killed themselves in extremity, and were found dead in a field of corn. This was the same Pethion who had been so long the idol of the Parisians, and who, when the forfeiture of the King was resolved on, had been heard to say with simple vanity, "If they should force me to become Regent now, I cannot see any means by which I can avoid it." Others of this unhappy party shared the same melancholy fate. Condorcet, who had pronounced his vote for the King's life, but in perpetual fetters, was arrested, and poisoned himself. Rabaud de St Etienne was betrayed by a friend in whom he trusted, and was executed. Roland was found dead in the high road, accomplishing a prophecy of his wife, whom the Jacobins had condemned to death, and who had declared her conviction that her husband would not long survive her. That remarkable woman, happy if her high talents had, in youth, fallen under the direction of those who could better have cultivated them, made before the revolutionary tribunal a defence more manly than the most eloquent of the Girondins. The bystanders, who had become amateurs in cruelty, were as much delighted with her deportment, as the hunter with the pulling down a noble stag. "What sense," they said; "what wit, what courage! What a magnificent spectacle it will be to behold such a woman upon the scaffold!" She met her death with great firmness, and, as she passed the statue of Liberty, on her road to execution, she exclaimed, "Ah, Liberty! what crimes are committed in thy name!"

About forty-two of the Girondist deputies perished by the guillotine, by suicide, or by the fatigue of their wanderings. About twenty-four escaped these perils, and were, after many and various sufferings, recalled to the Convention, when the Jacobin influence was destroyed. They owed their fall to the fantastic philosophy and visionary theories which they had adopted, not less than to their presumptuous confidence, that popular assemblies, when

actuated by the most violent personal feelings, must yield to the weight of argument, as inanimate bodies obey the impulse of external force; and that they who possess the highest powers of oratory, can, by mere elocution, take the weight from clubs, the edge from sabres, and the angry and brutal passions from those who wield them. They made no further figure as a party in any of the state changes in France; and, in relation to their experimental republic, may remind the reader of the presumptuous champion of antiquity, who was caught in the cleft oak, which he in vain attempted to rend asunder. History has no more to say on the subject of La Gironde, considered as a party name

CHAPTER XV.

Views of Parties in Britain relative to the Revolution.—Affiliated Societies—Counterpoised by Aristocratic Associations.—Aristocratic Party eager for War with France.—The French proclaim the Navigation of the Scheldt.—British Ambassador recalled from Paris, and French Envoy no longer accredited in London.—France declares War against England.—British Army sent to Holland, under the Duke of York—State of the Army.—View of the Military Positions of France—in Flanders—on the Rhine—in Piedmont—Savoy—on the Pyrenees.—State of the War in La Vendée—Description of the Country—Le Bocage—Le Louroux—Close Union betwixt the Nobles and Peasantry—Both strongly attached to Royalty, and abhorrent of the Revolution.—The Priests.—The Religion of the Vendéans outraged by the Convention.—A general Insurrection takes place in 1793.—Military Organization and Habits of the Vendéans.—Division in the British Cabinet on the Mode of conducting the War.—Pitt—Windham.—Reasoning upon the Subject.—Capitulation of Mentz enables 15,000 Veterans to act in La Vendée.—Vendéans defeated, and pass the Loire—They defeat, in their turn, the French Troops at Laval—But are ultimately destroyed and dispersed.—Unfortunate Expedition to Quiberon.—La Charette defeated and executed, and the War of La Vendée finally terminated.—Return to the State of France in Spring 1793.—Unsuccessful Resistance of Bourdeaux, Marseilles, and Lyons, to the Convention.—Siege of Lyons—Its surrender and dreadful Punishment.—Siege of Toulon.

THE Jacobins, by their successive victories on the 31st May and 2d June 1793, had vanquished and driven from the field their adversaries; and we have already seen with what fury they had pursued their scattered enemies, and dealt among them vengeance and death. But the situation of the country, both in regard to external and internal relations, was so precarious, that it required the exertion of men as bold and unhesitating as now assumed the guidance of the power of France, to exert the energies necessary to repel foreign force, and at the same time to subdue internal dissension.

We have seen that England had become in a great measure divided into two large parties, one of which continued to applaud the French Revolution, although the wise and good among them reprobated its excesses; while the other, with eyes fixed in detestation upon the cruelties, confiscations, and horrors of every description which it had given rise to, looked on the very name of this great change,—though no doubt comprehending much good as well as evil,—with the unmixed feelings of men contemplating a spectacle equally dreadful and disgusting.

The affair of the 10th of August, and the approaching fate of the King, excited general interest in Britain; and a strong inclination became visible among

the higher and middling classes, that the nation should take up arms, and interfere in the fate of the unhappy Louis.

Mr Pitt had been making up his mind to the same point; but feeling how much his own high talents were turned to the improvement of the internal regulations and finances of the country, he hesitated for some time to adopt a hostile course, though approved by the sovereign, and demanded by a large proportion of his subjects. But new circumstances arose every day to compel a decision on this important point.

The French, whether in their individual or collective capacities, have been always desirous to take the lead among European nations, and to be considered as the foremost member of the civilized republic. In almost all her vicissitudes, France has addressed herself as much to the citizens of other countries as to those of her own; and it was thus, that in the speeches of her statesmen, invitations were thrown out to the subjects of other states, to imitate the example of the Republic, cast away the rubbish of their old institutions, dethrone their Kings, demolish their nobility, divide the lands of the church and the aristocracy among the lower classes, and arise a free and regenerated people. In Britain as elsewhere, these doctrines carried a fascinating sound; for Britain as well as France had men of parts, who thought themselves neglected,—men of merit, who conceived themselves oppressed,—experimentalists, who would willingly put the laws in their revolutionary crucible,—and men desirous of novelties in the church and in the state, either from the eagerness of restless curiosity, or the hopes of bettering by the change. Above all, Britain had a far too ample mass of poverty and ignorance, subject always to be acted upon by the hope of license. Affiliated societies were formed in almost all the towns of Great Britain. They corresponded with each other, held very high and intimidating language, and seemed to frame themselves on the French model. They addressed the National Convention of France directly in the name of their own bodies, and of societies united for the same purpose; and congratulated them on their freedom, and on the manner in which they had gained it, with many a broad hint that their example would not be lost on Britain. The persons who composed these societies had, generally speaking, little pretension to rank or influence; and though they contained some men of considerable parts, there was a deficiency of anything like weight or respectability in their meetings. Their consequence lay chiefly in the numbers who were likely to be influenced by their arguments; and these were extraordinarily great, especially in large towns, and in the manufacturing districts. That state of things began to take place in Britain, which had preceded the French Revolution; but the British aristocracy, well cemented together, and possessing great weight in the state, took the alarm sooner, and adopted precautions more effectual, than had been thought of in France. They associated together in political unions on their side, and, by the weight of influence, character, and fortune, soon obtained a superiority, which made it dangerous, or at least inconvenient, to many, whose situations in society rendered them in some degree dependent upon the favour of the aristocracy, to dissent violently from their opinions. The political Shibboleth, used by these associations, was a renunciation of the doctrines of the French Revolution; and they have been reproached that this abhorrence was expressed by some of them in terms so strong, as if designed to withhold the subscribers from attempting any reformation in their own government, even by the most constitutional means. In short, while the democratical party made in their clubs the most violent and furious speeches against the aristocrats, the others became doubly prejudiced against reform of every description, and all who attempted to assert its propriety. After all, had this political ferment broke out in Britain at any other period, or on any other occasion, it would have probably passed away like other heart-burnings of the same description,

which interest for a time, but weary out the public attention, and are laid aside and forgotten. But the French Revolution blazed in the neighbourhood like a beacon of hope to the one party, of fear and caution to the other. The shouts of the democratic triumphs—the foul means by which their successes were obtained, and the cruel use which was made of them, increased the animosity of both parties in England. In the fury of party zeal, the democrats excused many of the excesses of the French Revolution, in respect of its tendency; while the other party, in condemning the whole Revolution, both root and branch, forgot that, after all, the struggle of the French nation to recover their liberty, was, in its commencement, not only justifiable, but laudable.

The wild and inflated language addressed by the French statesmen to mankind in general, and the spirit of conquest which the nation had lately evinced, mixed with their marked desire to extend their political principles, and with the odium which they had heaped upon themselves by the King's death, made the whole aristocratic party, commanding a very large majority in both Houses of Parliament, become urgent that war should be declared against France; a holy war, it was said, against treason, blasphemy, and murder, and a necessary war, in order to break off all connexion betwixt the French government and the discontented part of our own subjects, who could not otherwise be prevented from the most close, constant, and dangerous intercourse with them.

Another reason for hostilities, more in parallel with similar cases in history, occurred, from the French having, by a formal decree, proclaimed the Scheldt navigable. In so doing, a point had been assumed as granted, upon the denial of which the States of Holland had always rested as the very basis of their national prosperity. It is probable that this might, in other circumstances, have been made the subject of negotiation. But the difference of opinion on the general politics of the Revolution, and the mode in which it had been carried on, set the governments of France and England in such direct and mortal opposition to each other, that war became inevitable.

Lord Gower, the British ambassador, was recalled from Paris, immediately on the King's execution. The prince to whom he was sent was no more; and, on the same ground, the French envoy at the Court of St. James's, though not dismissed by his Majesty's government, was made acquainted that the ministers no longer considered him as an accredited person. Yet, through Maret, a subordinate agent, Pitt continued to keep up some correspondence with the French government, in a lingering desire to preserve peace, if possible. What the British minister chiefly wished was, to have satisfactory assurances that the strong expressions of a decree, which the French Convention had passed on the 19th November, were not to be considered as applicable to England. The decree was in these words: "The National Convention declares, in the name of the French nation, that it will grant fraternity and assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty; and it charges the executive power to send the necessary orders to the generals, to give succours to such people, and to defend those citizens who have suffered, or may suffer, in the cause of liberty."—"That this decree might not remain a secret to those for whose benefit it was intended, a translation of it, in every foreign language, was ordered to be printed."* The Convention, as well as the ministers of France, refused every disavowal of the decree as applicable to Great Britain; were equally reluctant to grant explanation of any kind on the opening of the Scheldt; and finally, without one dissentient voice, the whole Convention, in a full meeting, declared war upon England;—which last nation is, nevertheless, sometimes represented, even at this day, as having declared war upon France.

In fact, Mr Pitt came unwillingly into the war. With even more than his great father's ministerial talents, he did not habitually nourish the schemes of

* Annual Register for 1793, p. 153.

military triumph which were familiar to the genius of Chatham, and was naturally unwilling, by engaging in an expensive war, to derange those plans of finance by which he had retrieved the revenues of Great Britain from a very low condition. It is said of Chatham, that he considered it as the best economy, to make every military expedition which he fitted out, of such a power and strength, as to overbear, as far as possible, all chance of opposition. A general officer, who was to be employed in such a piece of service, having demanded a certain body of troops as sufficient to effect his purpose, "Take double the number," said Lord Chatham, "and answer with your head for your success." His son had not the same mode of computation, and would perhaps have been more willing to have reduced the officer's terms, chaffered with him for the lowest number, and finally despatched him at the head of as small a body as the general could have been prevailed on to consider as affording any prospect of success. This untimely economy of resources arose from the expense attending the British army. They are certainly one of the bravest, best appointed, and most liberally paid in Europe; but in forming demands on their valour, and expectations from their exertions, their fellow-subjects are apt to indulge extravagant computations, from not being in the habit of considering military calculations, or being altogether aware of the numerical superiority possessed by other countries. That one Englishman will fight two Frenchmen is certain; but that he will beat them, though a good article of the popular creed, must be allowed to be more dubious; and it is not wise to wage war on such odds, or to suppose that, because our soldiers are infinitely valuable to us, and a little expensive besides, it is therefore judicious to send them in small numbers against desperate odds.

Another point, well touched by Sheridan, on the debate on the question of peace or war, was not sufficiently attended to by the British administration. That statesman, whose perception of the right and wrong of any great constitutional question was as acute as that of any whomsoever of his great political contemporaries, said, "He wished every possible exertion to be made for the preservation of peace. If, however, that were impracticable, in such case, but in such case only, he proposed to vote for a vigorous war. Not a war of shifts and scraps, of timid operation, or protracted effort; but a war conducted with such energy as might convince the world that we were contending for our dearest and most valuable privileges."*

Of this high-spirited and most just principle, the policy of Britain unfortunately lost sight during the first years of the war, when there occurred more than one opportunity in which a home and prostrating blow might have been aimed at her gigantic adversary.

A gallant auxiliary army was, however, immediately fitted out, and embarked for Holland, with his Royal Highness the Duke of York at their head, as if the King had meant to give to his allies the dearest pledge in his power, how serious was the interest which he took in their defence.

But though well equipped, and commanded, under the young Prince, by Abercromby, Dundas, Sir William Erskine, and many other officers of gallantry and experience, it must be owned that the British army had not then recovered the depressing and disorganizing effects of the American war. The soldiers were, indeed, fine men on the parade; but their external appearance was acquired by dint of a thousand minute and vexatious attentions, exacted from them at the expense of private comfort, and which, after all, only gave them the exterior appearance of high drilling, in exchange for ease of motion and simplicity of dress. No general system of manœuvres, we believe, had been adopted for the use of the forces; each commanding officer managed his regiment according to his own pleasure. In a field-day, two or three battalions

* Annual Register for 1793, p. 250.

could not act in concert, without much previous consultation; in action, they got on as chance directed. The officers, too, were acquainted both with their soldiers and with their duty, in a degree far inferior to what is now exacted from them. Our system of purchasing commissions, which is necessary to connect the army with the country, and the property of the country, was at that time so much abused, that a mere beardless boy might be forced at once through the subordinate and subaltern steps into a company or a majority, without having been a month in the army. In short, all those gigantic abuses were still subsisting, which the illustrious prince whom we have named eradicated from the British army, by regulations for which his country can never be sufficiently grateful, and without which they could never have performed the distinguished part finally destined to them in the terrible drama, which was about to open under less successful auspices.

There hung also, like a cloud, upon the military fame of England, the unfortunate issue of the American struggle, in which the advantages obtained by regulars, against less disciplined forces, had been trifled with in the commencement, until the genius of Washington, and the increasing spirit and numbers of the continental armies, completely overbalanced, and almost annihilated, that original preponderance.

Yet the British soldiery did not disgrace their high national character, nor show themselves unworthy of fighting under the eye of the son of their monarch; and when they joined the Austrian army, under the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg, gave many demonstrations both of valour and discipline. The storming the fortified camp of the French at Famars—the battle of Lincelles—the part they bore in the sieges of Valenciennes and Condé, both of which surrendered successively to the allied forces, upheld the reputation of their country, and amounted, indeed, to what in former wars would have been the fruits of a very successful campaign. But Europe was now arrived at a time when war was no longer to be carried on according to the old usage, by the agency of standing armies of moderate numbers; when a battle lost and won, or a siege raised or successful, was thought sufficient for the active exertions of the year, and the troops on either side were drawn off into winter-quarters, while diplomacy took up the contest which tactics had suspended. All this was to be laid aside; and instead of this drowsy state of hostility, nations were to contend with each other like individuals in mortal conflict, bringing not merely the hands, but every limb of the body into violent and furious struggle. The situation of France, both in internal and external relations, required the most dreadful efforts which had been ever made by any country; and the exertions which she demanded, were either willingly made by the enthusiasm of the inhabitants, or extorted by the energy and severity of the Revolutionary government. We must bestow a single glance on the state of the country, ere we proceed to notice the measures adopted for its defence.

On the eastern frontier of Flanders, considerable advances had been made by the English and Hanoverian army, in communication and conjunction with the Austrian force under the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg, an excellent officer, but who, belonging to the old school of formal and prolonged war, never sufficiently considered that a new description of enemies were opposed to him, who were necessarily to be combated in a different manner from those whom his youth had encountered, and who, unenterprising himself, does not appear either to have calculated upon, or prepared to counteract, strokes of audacity and activity on the part of the enemy.

The war on the Rhine was furiously maintained by Prussians and Austrians united. The French lost the important town of Mentz, were driven out of other places, and experienced many reverses, although Custine, Moreau, Houchard, Beauharnois, and other general officers of high merit, had already given lustre to the arms of the Republic. The loss of the strong lines of

Weissenburgh, which were carried by General Wurmser, a distinguished Austrian officer, completed the shade of disadvantage which here hung on the Republican banners.

In Piedmont, the French were also unsuccessful, though the scale was less grand and imposing. The Republican General Brunet was unfortunate, and he was forced from his camp at Belvidere; while, on the side of Savoy, the King of Sardinia also obtained several temporary advantages.

On the Pyrenees, the Republican armies had been equally unsuccessful. A Spanish army, conducted with more spirit than had been lately the case with the troops of that once proud monarchy, had defeated the Republican General Servan, and crossed the Bidassoa. On the eastern extremity of these celebrated mountains, the Spaniards had taken the towns of Port Vendre and Ollioules.

Assailed on so many sides, and by so many enemies, all of whom, excepting the Sardinians, had more or less made impression upon the frontiers of the Republic, it might seem, that the only salvation which remained for France, must have been sought for in the unanimity of her inhabitants. But so far was the nation from possessing this first of requisites for a successful opposition to the overpowering coalition which assailed her, that a dreadful civil war was already waged in the western provinces of France, which threatened, from its importance and the success of the insurgents, to undo in a great measure the work of the Revolution; while similar discords breaking out on different points in the south, menaced conclusions no less formidable.

It does not belong to us to trace the interesting features of the war in La Vendée with a minute pencil, but they mingle too much with the history of the period to be altogether omitted.

We have elsewhere said, that, speaking of La Vendée as a district, it was there alone, through the whole kingdom of France, that the peasants and the nobles, in other words the proprietors and cultivators of the soil, remained on terms of close and intimate connexion and friendship, which made them feel the same undivided interest in the great changes created by the Revolution. The situation of La Vendée, its soil and character, as well as the manners of the people, had contributed to an arrangement of interests and habits of thinking, which rendered the union betwixt these two classes indissoluble.

La Vendée is a wooded and pastoral country, not indeed mountainous, but abounding in inequalities of ground, crossed by brooks, and intersected by a variety of canals and ditches, made for drainage, but which become, with the numerous and intricate thickets, posts of great strength in the time of war. The inclosures seemed to be won, as it were, out of the woodland; and the paths which traversed the country were so intricate and perplexed, as to render it inaccessible to strangers, and not easily travelled through by the natives themselves. There were almost no roads practicable for ordinary carriages during the rainy season; and the rainy season in La Vendée is a long one. The ladies of rank, when they visited, went in carriages drawn by bullocks; the gentlemen, as well as the peasants, travelled chiefly on foot; and by assistance of the long leaping-poles, which they carried for that purpose, surmounted the ditches and other obstacles which other travellers found impassable.

The whole tract of country is about one hundred and fifty miles square, and lies at the mouth and on the southern bank of the Loire. The internal part is called Le Bocage (the Thicket,) because partaking in a peculiar degree of the wooded and intricate character which belongs to the whole country. That portion of La Vendée which lies close to the Loire, and nearer its mouth, is called Le Louroux. The neighbouring districts partook in the insurrection, but the strength and character which it assumed was derived chiefly from La Vendée.

The union betwixt the noblesse of La Vendée and their peasants, was of the most intimate character. Their chief exportations from the district consisted

in the immense herds of cattle which they reared in their fertile meadows, and which supplied the consumption of the metropolis. These herds, as well as the land on which they were raised, were in general the property of the Seigneur; but the farmer possessed a joint interest in the latter. He managed the stock and disposed of it at market, and there was an equitable adjustment of their interests in disposing of the produce.

Their amusements were also in common. The chase of wolves, not only for the sake of sport, but to clear the woods of those ravenous animals, was pursued as of yore by the Seigneur at the head of his followers and vassals. Upon the evenings of Sundays and holidays, the young people of each village and *métairie* repaired to the court-yard of the chateau, as the natural and proper scene for their evening amusement, and the family of the Baron often took part in the pastime.

In a word, the two divisions of society depended mutually on each other, and were strongly knit together by ties, which, in other districts of France, existed only in particular instances. The Vendean peasant was the faithful and attached, though humble friend of his lord; he was his partner in bad and good fortune; submitted to his decision the disputes which might occur betwixt him and his neighbours; and had recourse to his protection, if he sustained wrong, or was threatened with injustice from any one.

This system of simple and patriarchal manners could not have long subsisted under any great inequality of fortune. Accordingly, we find that the wealthiest of the Vendean nobility did not hold estates worth more than twelve or fifteen hundred a-year, while the lowest might be three or four hundred. They were not accordingly much tempted by exuberance of wealth to seek to display magnificence; and such as went to court, and conformed to the fashions of the capital, were accustomed to lay them aside in all haste when they returned to the Bocage, and to reassume the simple manners of their ancestors.

All the incentives to discord which abounded elsewhere through France, were wanting in this wild and wooded region, where the peasant was the noble's affectionate partner and friend, the noble the natural judge and protector of the peasant. The people had retained the feelings of the ancient French in favour of royalty; they listened with dissatisfaction and disgust to the accounts of the Revolution as it proceeded; and feeling themselves none of the evils in which it originated, its whole tendency became the object of their alarm and suspicion. The neighbouring districts, and Bretagne in particular, were agitated by similar commotions; for although the revolutionary principles predominated in the towns of the west, they were not relished by the country people any more than by the nobles. Great agitation had for some time taken place through the provinces of Bretagne, Anjou, Maine, and Poitou, to which the strength of the insurrection in La Vendée gave impulse. It was not, however, a political impulse which induced the Vendéans to take the field. The influence of religion, seconded by that of natural affection, was the immediate stimulating motive.

In a country so simple and virtuous in its manners as we have described La Vendée, religious devotion must necessarily be a general attribute of the inhabitants, who, conscious of loving their neighbours as themselves, are equally desirous, to the extent of their strength and capacity, to love and honour the Great Being who created all. The Vendéans were therefore very regular in the performance of their prescribed religious duties; and their parish priest, or curé, held an honoured and influential rank in their little society, was the attendant of the sick-bed of the peasant, as well for rendering medical as religious aid; his counsellor in his family affairs, and often the arbiter of disputes not of sufficient importance to be carried before the Seigneur. The priests were themselves generally natives of the country, more distinguished for the primitive duty with which they discharged their office, than for talents and learning

The curé took frequent share in the large hunting parties which he announced from the pulpit, and after having said mass, attended in person with the fowling-piece on his shoulder. This active and simple manner of life rendered the priests predisposed to encounter the fatigues of war. They accompanied the bands of Vendéans with the crucifix displayed, and promised, in the name of the Deity, victory to the survivors, and honour to those who fell in the patriotic combat. But Madame La Roche-Jacquelein repels, as a calumny, their bearing arms, except for the purpose of self-defence.

Almost all these parish priests were driven from their cures by the absurd and persecuting fanaticism of that decree of the Assembly, which, while its promoters railed against illiberality and intolerance, deprived of their office and of their livelihood, soon after of liberty and life, those churchmen who would not renounce the doctrines in which they had been educated, and which they had sworn to maintain.* In La Vendée, as elsewhere, where the curates resisted this unjust and impolitic injunction of the legislature, persecution followed on the part of the government, and was met in its turn by violence on that of the people.

The peasants maintained in secret their ancient pastors, and attended their ministry in woods and deserts; while the intruders, who were settled in the livings of the recusants, dared hardly appear in the churches without the protection of the National Guards.

So early as 1791, when Dumouriez commanded the forces at Nantes, and the districts adjacent, the flame of dissension had begun to kindle. That general's sagacity induced him to do his best to appease the quarrel by moderating betwixt the parties. His military eye detected in the inhabitants and their country an alarming scene for civil war. He received the slightest concessions on the part of the parish priests as satisfactory, and appears to have quieted the disturbances of the country, at least for a time.

But in 1793, the same causes of discontent, added to others, hurried the inhabitants of La Vendée into a general insurrection of the most formidable description. The events of the 10th of August 1792, had driven from Paris a great proportion of the Royalist nobility, who had many of them carried their discontents and their counter-revolutionary projects into a country prepared to receive and adopt them.

Then followed the Conventional decree, which supported their declaration of war by a compulsory levy of three hundred thousand men throughout France. This measure was felt as severe by even those departments in which the revolutionary principles were most predominant, but was regarded as altogether intolerable by the Vendéans, averse alike to the republican cause and principles. They resisted its exaction by main force, delivered the conscripts in many instances, defeated the National Guards in others, and finding that they had incurred the vengeance of a sanguinary government, resolved by force to maintain the resistance which in force had begun. Thus originated that celebrated war, which raged so long in the very bosom of France, and threatened the stability of her government, even while the Republic was achieving the most brilliant victories over her foreign enemies.

It is remote from our purpose to trace the history of these hostilities; but a sketch of their nature and character is essential to a general view of the Revolution, and the events connected with it.

The insurgents, though engaged in the same cause, and frequently co-operating, were divided into different bodies, under leaders independent of each other. Those of the right bank of the Loire were chiefly under the orders of the celebrated La Charette, who, descended from a family distinguished as commanders of privateers, and himself a naval officer, had taken on him this dangerous

command. An early wandering disposition, not unusual among youth of eager and ambitious character, had made him acquainted with the inmost recesses of the woods, and his native genius had induced him to anticipate the military advantages which they afforded. In his case, as in many others, either the sagacity of these un instructed peasants led them to choose for command men whose talents best fitted them to enjoy it, or perhaps the perils which environed such authority prevented its being aspired to, save by those whom a mixture of resolution and prudence led to feel themselves capable of maintaining their character when invested with it. It was remarkable also, that in choosing their leaders, the insurgents made no distinction between the noblesse and the inferior ranks. Names renowned in ancient history—Talmont, D'Autichamp, L'Escure, and La Roche-Jacquelein, were joined in equal command with the game-keeper Stoffet; Cathelineau, an itinerant wool-merchant; La Charette, a roturier of slight pretensions; and others of the lowest order, whom the time and the public voice called into command, but who, nevertheless, do not seem, in general, to have considered their official command as altering the natural distinction of their rank in society.* In their success, they formed a general council of officers, priests, and others, who held their meetings at Chatillon, and directed the military movements of the different bodies; assembled them at pleasure on particular points, and for particular objects of service; and dispersed them to their homes when these were accomplished.

With an organization so simple, the Vendean insurgents, in about two months, possessed themselves of several towns and an extensive tract of country; and though repeatedly attacked by regular forces, commanded by experienced generals, they were far more frequently victors than vanquished, and inflicted more loss on the republicans by gaining a single battle, than they themselves sustained in repeated defeats.

Yet at first their arms were of the most simple and imperfect kind. Fowling-pieces, and fusees of every calibre, they possessed from their habits as huntmen and fowlers; for close encounter they had only scythes, axes, clubs, and such weapons as anger places most readily in the hands of the peasant. Their victories, latterly, supplied them with arms in abundance, and they manufactured gunpowder for their own use in great quantity.

Their tactics were peculiar to themselves, but of a kind so well suited to their country and their habits, that it seems impossible to devise a better and more formidable system. The Vendean took the field with the greatest simplicity of military equipment. His scrip served as a cartridge-box, his uniform was the country short jacket and pantaloons, which he wore at his ordinary labour; a cloth knapsack contained bread and some necessaries, and thus he was ready for service. They were accustomed to move with great secrecy and silence among the thickets and enclosures by which their country is intersected, and were thus enabled to choose at pleasure the most favourable points of attack or defence. Their army, unlike any other in the world, was not divided into companies, or regiments, but followed in bands, and at their pleasure, the chiefs to whom they were most attached. Instead of drums or military music, they used, like the ancient Swiss and Scottish soldiers, the horns of cattle for giving signals to their troops. Their officers wore, for distinction, a sort of chequered red handkerchief knotted round their head, with others of the same colour tied round their waist, by way of sash, in which they stuck their pistols.†

* Madame La Roche-Jacquelein mentions an interesting anecdote of a young plebeian, a distinguished officer, whose habits of respect would scarce permit him to sit down in her presence. This cannot be termed servility. It is the noble pride of a generous mind, faithful to its original impressions, and disclaiming the merits which others are ready to heap on it.

† The adoption of this wild costume, which procured them the name of *brigands*, from its fantastic singularity, originated in the whim of Henri La Roche-Jacquelein, who first used the attire. But as this peculiarity, joined to the venturous exposure of his person, occasioned a gen-

The attack of the Vendéans was that of sharp-shooters. They dispersed themselves so as to surround their adversaries with a semicircular fire, maintained by a body of formidable marksmen, accustomed to take aim with fatal precision, and whose skill was the more dreadful, because, being habituated to take advantage of every tree, bush, or point of shelter, those who were dealing destruction amongst others, were themselves comparatively free from risk. This manœuvre was termed *s'égaillet*; and the execution of it resembling the Indian bush-fighting, was, like the attack of the Red warriors, accompanied by whoops and shouts, which seemed, from the extended space through which they resounded, to multiply the number of the assailants.

When the Republicans, galled in this manner, pressed forward to a close attack, they found no enemy on which to wreak their vengeance; for the loose array of the Vendéans gave immediate passage to the head of the charging column, while its flanks, as it advanced, were still more exposed than before to the murderous fire of their invisible enemies. In this manner they were sometimes led on from point to point, until the regulars meeting with a barricade, or an *abbatis*, or a strong position in front, or becoming perhaps involved in a defile, the Vendéans exchanged their fatal musketry for a close and furious onset, throwing themselves with the most devoted courage among the enemy's ranks, and slaughtering them in great numbers. If, on the other hand, the insurgents were compelled to give way, a pursuit was almost as dangerous to the Republicans as an engagement. The Vendean, when hard-pressed, threw away his clogs, or wooden-shoes, of which he could make himself a new pair at the next resting-place, sprang over a fence or canal, loaded his fusee as he ran, and discharged it at the pursuer with a fatal aim, whenever he found opportunity of pausing for that purpose.

This species of combat, which the ground rendered so advantageous to the Vendéans, was equally so in case of victory or defeat. If the Republicans were vanquished, their army was nearly destroyed; for the preservation of order became impossible, and without order their extermination was inevitable, while baggage, ammunition, carriages, guns, and all the material part, as it is called, of the defeated army, fell into possession of the conquerors. On the other hand, if the Vendéans sustained a loss, the victors found nothing on the field but the bodies of the slain, and the *sabots*, or wooden-shoes, of the fugitives. The few prisoners whom they made had generally thrown away or concealed their arms, and their army having no baggage or carriages of any kind, could of course lose none. Pursuit was very apt to convert an advantage into a defeat; for the cavalry could not act, and the infantry, dispersed in the chase, became frequent victims to those whom they pursued.

In the field, the Vendéans were courageous to rashness. They hesitated not to attack and carry artillery with no other weapons than their staves; and most of their worst losses proceeded from their attacking fortified towns and positions with the purpose of carrying them by main force. After conquest they were in general humane and merciful. But this depended on the character of their chiefs. At Machecoul, the insurgents conducted themselves with great ferocity in the very beginning of the civil war; and towards the end of it, mutual and reciprocal injuries had so exasperated the parties against each other, that quarter was neither given nor taken on either side. Yet until provoked by the extreme cruelties of the Revolutionary party, and unless when conducted by some peculiarly ferocious chief, the character of the Vendéans united clemency with courage. They gave quarter readily to the vanquished, but having no means of retaining prisoners, they usually shaved their heads before they set them at liberty, that they might be distinguished, if found again in arms, con-

eral cry among the Republicans, of "Aim at the red handkerchief," other officers assumed the fashion to diminish the danger of the chief whom they valued so highly, until at length it became a kind of uniform.

trary to their parole. A no less striking feature, was the severity of a discipline respecting property, which was taught them only by their moral sense. No temptation could excite them to pillage; and Madame La Roche-Jacquelein has preserved the following singular instance of their simple honesty:—After the peasants had taken the town of Bressuire by storm, she overheard two or three of them complain of the want of tobacco, to the use of which they were addicted, like the natives of moist countries in general. “What,” said the lady, “is there no tobacco in the shops?”—“Tobacco enough,” answered the simple-hearted and honest peasants, who had not learned to make steel supply the want of gold,—“tobacco enough; but we have no money to pay for it.”

Amidst these primitive warriors were mingled many gentlemen of the first families in France, who, Royalists from principle, had fled to La Vendée rather than submit to the dominion of the Convention, or the Convention’s yet more cruel masters. There were found many men, the anecdotes told of whom remind us continually of the age of Henri Quatre, and the heroes of chivalry. In these ranks, and almost on a level with the valiant peasants of which they were composed, fought the calm, steady, and magnanimous L’Escure,—D’Elbée, a man of the most distinguished military reputation,—Bonchamp, the gallant and the able officer, who, like the Constable Montmorency, with all his talent, was persecuted by fortune,—the chivalrous Henry La Roche-Jacquelein, whose call upon his soldiers was—“If I fly, slay me—if I advance, follow me—if I fall, avenge me;” with other names distinguished* in the roll of fame, and not the less so that they have been recorded by the pen of affection.

The object of the insurrection was announced in the title of The Royal and Catholic Army, assumed by the Vendéans. In their moments of highest hope their wishes were singularly modest. Had they gained Paris, and replaced the royal authority in France, they meditated the following simple boons:—1. They had resolved to petition, that the name of La Vendée be given to the Bocage and its dependencies, which should be united under a separate administration, instead of forming, as at present, a part of three distinct provinces.—2. That the restored Monarch would honour the Bocage with a visit.—3. That in remembrance of the loyal services of the country, a white flag should be displayed from each steeple, and the King should add a cohort of Vendéans to his body guard.—4. That former useful projects of improving the navigation of the Loire and its canals, should be perfected by the government. So little of selfish hope or ambition was connected with the public spirit of these patriarchal warriors.

The war of La Vendée was waged with various fate for nearly two years, during which the insurgents, or brigands as they were termed, gained by far the greater number of advantages, though with means infinitely inferior to those of the government, which detached against them one general after another, at the head of numerous armies, with equally indifferent success. Most of the Republicans intrusted with this fatal command suffered by the guillotine, for not having done that which circumstances rendered impossible.

Upwards of two hundred battles and skirmishes were fought in this devoted country. The revolutionary fever was in its access; the shedding of blood seemed to have become positive pleasure to the perpetrators of slaughter, and was varied by each invention which cruelty could invent to give it new zest. The habitations of the Vendéans were destroyed, their families subjected to violation and massacre, their cattle houghed and slaughtered, and their crops

* The Memoirs of Madame Bonchamp, and still more those of La Roche-Jacquelein, are remarkable for the virtues of the heart, as well as the talents, which are displayed by their authors. Without affectation, without vanity, without violence or impotent repining, these ladies have described the sanguinary and irregular warfare, in which they and those who were dearest to them were engaged for so long and stormy a period; and we arise from the perusal sadder and wiser, by having learned what the brave can dare, and what the gentle can endure with patience.

burnt and wasted. One Republican column assumed and merited the name of the Infernal, by the horrid atrocities which they committed. At Pillau, they roasted the women and children in a heated oven. Many similar horrors could be added, did not the heart and hand recoil from the task. Without quoting any more special instances of horror, we use the words of a Republican eye-witness, to express the general spectacle presented by the theatre of civil conflict.

"I did not see a single male being at the towns of Saint Hermand, Chantonay, or Herbiers. A few women alone had escaped the sword. Country-seats, cottages, habitations of whichever kind, were burnt. The herds and flocks were wandering in terror around their usual places of shelter, now smoking in ruins. I was surprised by night, but the wavering and dismal blaze of conflagration afforded light over the country. To the bleating of the disturbed flocks, and bellowing of the terrified cattle, was joined the deep hoarse notes of carrion crows, and the yells of wild animals coming from the recesses of the woods to prey on the carcasses of the slain. At length a distant column of fire, widening and increasing as I approached, served me as a beacon. It was the town of Mortagne in flames. When I arrived there, no living creatures were to be seen, save a few wretched women who were striving to save some remnants of their property from the general conflagration."*

Such is civil war; and to this pass had its extremities reduced the smiling, peaceful, and virtuous country, which we have described a few pages before.

It is no wonder, after such events, that the hearts of the peasants became hardened in turn, and that they executed fearful vengeance on those who could not have the face to expect mercy. We read, therefore, without surprise, that the Republican General Haxo, a man of great military talent, and who had distinguished himself in the Vendean war, shot himself through the head when he saw his army defeated by the insurgents, rather than encounter their vengeance.

During the superiority of the Vendéans, it may be asked why their efforts, so gigantic in themselves, never extended beyond the frontier of their own country; and why an insurrection, so considerable and so sustained, neither made any great impression on the French Convention, where they were spoken of only as a handful of brigands, nor on foreign nations, by whom their existence, far less their success, seems hardly to have been known? On the former subject, it is perhaps sufficient to observe, that the war of the Vendéans, and their mode of conducting it, so formidable in their own country, became almost nugatory when extended into districts of an open character, and affording high roads and plains, by which cavalry and artillery could act against peasants, who formed no close ranks, and carried no bayonets. Besides, the Vendéans remained bound to their ordinary occupation—they were necessarily children of the soil—and their army usually dispersed after the battle was over, to look after their cattle, cultivate the plot of arable land, and attend to their families. The discipline of their array, in which mere good-will supplied the place of the usual distinctions of rank, would not have been sufficient to keep them united in long and distant marches, and they must have found the want of a commissariat, a train of baggage, field-pieces, a general staff, and all the other accompaniments of a regular army, which, in the difficult country of La Vendée, familiar to the natives, and unknown to strangers, could be so easily dispensed with. In a word, an army which, under circumstances of hope and excitation, might one day amount to thirty or forty thousand, and on the next be diminished to the tenth part of the number, might be excellent for fighting battles, but could not be relied on for making conquests, or securing the advantages of victory.

It is not but that a man of D'Elbée's knowledge in the art of war, who acted

* Les Memoires d'un Ancien Administrateur des Armées Republicaines.

as one of their principal leaders, meditated higher objects for the Vendéans than merely the defence of their own province.

A superb prospect offered itself to them by a meditated attack on the town of Nantes. Upon the success of this attempt turned perhaps the fate of the Revolution. This beautiful and important commercial city is situated on the right bank of the Loire, which is there a fine navigable river, about twenty-seven miles from its junction with the sea. It is without fortifications of any regular description, but had a garrison of perhaps ten thousand men, and was covered by such hasty works of defence as time had permitted them to erect. The force of the Vendéans by which it was attacked, has been estimated so high as thirty or forty thousand men under D'Elbée, while the place was blockaded on the left bank by Charette, and an army of royalists equal in number to the actual assailants. Had this important place been gained, it would probably have changed the face of the war. One or more of the French princes might have resorted there with such adherents as they had then in arms. The Loire was open to succours from England, the indecision of whose cabinet might have been determined by a success so important. Bretagne and Normandy, already strongly disposed to the royal cause, would have, upon such encouragement, risen in mass upon the Republicans; and as Poitou and Anjou were already in possession of The Royal and Catholic Army, they might probably have opened a march upon Paris, distracted as the capital then was by civil and foreign war.

Accordingly,* the rockets which were thrown up, and the sound of innumerable bugle-horns, intimated to General Canclaux, who commanded the town, that he was to repel a general attack of the Vendéans. Fortunately for the infant republic, he was a man of military skill and high courage, and by his dexterous use of such means of defence as the place afforded, and particularly by a great superiority of artillery, he was enabled to baffle the attacks of the Vendéans, although they penetrated, with the utmost courage, into the suburbs, and engaged at close quarters the Republican troops. They were compelled to retreat after a fierce combat, which lasted from three in the morning till four in the afternoon.†

At different times after the failure of this bold and well-imagined attempt. opportunities occurred during which the allies, and the English government in particular, might have thrown important succours into La Vendée. The island of Noirmoutier was for some time in possession of the Royalists, when arms and money might have been supplied to them to any amount. Auxiliary forces would probably have been of little service, considering in what sort of country they were to be engaged, and with what species of troops they were to act. At least it would have required the talents of a Peterborough or a Montrose, in a foreign commander, to have freed himself sufficiently from the trammels of military pedantry, and availed himself of the peculiar qualities of such troops as the Vendéans, irresistible after their own fashion, but of a character the most opposite possible to the ideas of excellence entertained by a mere martinet.

But it is now well known, there was a division in the British cabinet concerning the mode of carrying on the war. Pitt was extremely unwilling to interfere with the internal government of France. He desired to see the Barrier of Flanders (so foolishly thrown open by the Emperor Joseph) again re-established, and he hoped from the success of the allied arms, that this might be attained,—that the French lust for attacking their neighbours might be ended—their wildness for crusading in the cause of innovation checked, and

* 18th June 1793.

† A picture by Vernet, representing the attack on Nantes, estimable as a work of art, but extremely curious in a historical point of view, used to be in the Luxembourg palace, and is probably now removed to the Louvre. The Vendéans are presented there in all their simplicity of attire, and devoted valour; the priests who attended them displaying their crosses, and encouraging the assault, which is, on the other hand, repelled by the regular steadiness of the Republican forces.

some political advances to a regular government effected. On the other hand, the enthusiastic, ingenious, but somewhat extravagant opinions of Windham, led him to espouse those of Burke in their utmost extent; and he recommended to England, as to Europe, the replacing the Bourbons, with the ancient royal government and constitution, as the fundamental principle on which the war should be waged. This variance of opinion so far divided the British council, that, as it proved, no sufficient efforts were made, either on the one line of conduct or the other.

Indeed, Madame La Roche-Jacquelein (who, however, we are apt to think, has been in some degree misled in her account of that matter) says, the only despatches received by the Vendéans from the British cabinet, indicated a singular ignorance of the state of La Vendée, which was certainly near enough to Jersey and Guernsey, to have afforded the means of obtaining accurate information upon the nature and principles of the Vendean insurrection.

The leaders of The Royal and Catholic Army received their first communication from Britain through a Royalist emissary, the Chevalier de Tinteniac, who carried them concealed in the wadding of his pistols, addressed to a supposed chief named Gaston, whose name had scarce been known among them. In this document they were required to say for what purpose they were in arms, whether in behalf of the old government, or of the constitution of 1791, or the principles of the Girondists? These were strange questions to be asked of men who had been in the field as pure Royalists for more than five months, who might have reasonably hoped that the news of their numerous and important victories had resounded through all Europe, but must at least have expected they should be well known to those neighbours of France who were at war with her present government. Assistance was promised, but in a general and indecisive way; nor did the testimony of Monsieur de Tinteniac give his friends much assurance that it was seriously proposed. In fact, no support ever arrived until after the first pacification of La Vendée. The ill-fated expedition to Quiberon, delayed until the cause of royalty was nigh hopeless, was at length undertaken, when its only consequence was that of involving in absolute destruction a multitude of brave and high-spirited men. But on looking back on a game so doubtful, it is easy to criticise the conduct of the players; and perhaps no blunder in war or politics is so common, as that which arises from missing the proper moment of exertion.

The French, although more able to seize the advantageous opportunity than we, (for their government being always in practice something despotic, is at liberty to act more boldly, secretly, and decisively, than that of England,) are nevertheless chargeable with similar errors. If the English cabinet missed the opportunities given by the insurrection of La Vendée, the French did not more actively improve those afforded by the Irish rebellion; and if we had to regret the too tardy and unhappy expedition to Quiberon, they in their turn might repent having thrown away the troops whom they landed at Castlehaven, after the pacification of Ireland, for the sole purpose, it would seem, of surrendering at Ballinamuck.

It is yet more wonderful, that a country whose dispositions were so loyal, and its local advantages so strong, should not have been made by the loyalists in general the centre of those counter-revolutionary exertions which were vainly expended on the iron eastern frontier, where the fine army of Condé wasted their blood about paltry frontier redoubts and fortresses. The nobles and gentlemen of France, fighting abreast with the gallant peasants of La Vendée, inspired with the same sentiments of loyalty with themselves, would have been more suitably placed than in the mercenary ranks of foreign nations. It is certain that the late King, Louis XVIII., and also his present Majesty, were desirous to have exposed their persons in the war of La Vendée. The former wrote to the Duke d'Harcourt—"What course remains for me but La Vendée?"

—Who can place me there?—England—Insist upon that point; and tell the English ministers in my name, that I demand from them a crown or a tomb.” If there were a serious intention of supporting these unfortunate Princes, the means of this experiment ought to have been afforded them, and that upon no stinted scale. The error of England through all the early part of the war, was an unwillingness to proportion her efforts to the importance of the ends she had in view.

Looking upon the various chances which might have befriended the unparalleled exertions of the Vendéans, considering the generous, virtuous, and disinterested character of those primitive soldiers, it is with sincere sorrow that we proceed to trace their extermination by the blood-thirsty ruffians of the reign of terror. Yet the course of Providence, after the lapse of time, is justified even in our weak and undiscerning eyes. We should indeed have read with hearts throbbing with the just feelings of gratified vengeance, that La Charette or La Roche-Jacquelein had successfully achieved, at the head of their gallant adherents, the road to Paris—had broke in upon the Committees of Public Safety and Public Security, like Thalaba the Destroyer into the Dom-Daniel; and with the same dreadful result to the agents of the horrors with which these revolutionary bodies had deluged France. But such a reaction, accomplished solely for the purpose of restoring the old despotic monarchy, could not have brought peace to France or to Europe; nay, could only have laid a foundation for farther and more lasting quarrels. The flame of liberty had been too widely spread in France to be quenched even by such a triumph of royalty as we have supposed, however pure the principles and high the spirit of the Vendéans. It was necessary that the nation should experience both the extremes, of furious license and of stern despotism, to fix the hopes of the various contending parties upon a form of government, in which a limited power in the monarch should be united to the enjoyment of all rational freedom in the subject. We return to our sad task.

Notwithstanding the desolating mode in which the Republicans conducted the war, with the avowed purpose of rendering La Vendée uninhabitable, the population seemed to increase in courage, and even in numbers, as their situation became more desperate. Renewed armies were sent into the devoted district, and successively destroyed in assaults, skirmishes, and ambuscades, where they were not slaughtered in general actions. More than a hundred thousand men were employed at one time in their efforts to subjugate this devoted province. But this could not last for ever; and a chance of war upon the frontiers, which threatened reverses to the Convention, compensated them by furnishing new forces, and of a higher description in point of character and discipline, for the subjection of La Vendée.

This was the surrender of the town of Mentz to the Prussians. By the capitulation, a garrison of near fifteen thousand experienced soldiers, and some officers of considerable name, were debarred from again bearing arms against the allies. These troops were employed in La Vendée, where the scale had already begun to preponderate against the dauntless and persevering insurgents. At the first encounters, the soldiers of Mentz, unacquainted with the Vendean mode of fighting, sustained loss, and were thought lightly of by the Royalists.* This opinion of their new adversaries was changed, in consequence of a defeat near Chollet, more dreadful in its consequences than any which the Vendéans had yet received, and which determined their generals to pass the Loire with their whole collected force, leave their beloved Bocage to the axes and brands of the victors, and carry the war into Bretagne, where they expected either to be supported by a descent of the English, or by a general insurrection of the inhabitants.

* They punned on the word *Moyence* (Mentz,) and said, the newly arrived Republicans were soldiers of *jugence* (potter's ware,) which could not endure the fire.

In this military emigration the Royalists were accompanied by their aged people, their wives, and their children; so that their melancholy march resembled that of the Cimbrians or Helvetians of old, when, abandoning their ancient dwellings, they wandered forth to find new settlements in a more fertile land. They crossed the river near Saint Florent, and the banks were blackened with nearly a hundred thousand pilgrims of both sexes, and of every age. The broad river was before them, and behind them their burning cottages and the exterminating sword of the Republicans. The means of embarkation were few and precarious; the affright of the females almost ungovernable; and such was the tumult and terror of the scene, that, in the words of Madame La Roche-Jacquelein, the awe-struck spectators could only compare it to the day of judgment. Without food, directions, or organization of any kind—without the show of an army, saving in the front and rear of the column, the centre consisting of their defenceless families marching together in a mass—these indomitable peasants defeated a Republican army under the walls of Laval.

The garrison of Mentz, whose arrival in La Vendée had been so fatal to the insurgents, and who had pursued them in a state of rout, as they thought, out of their own country, across the Loire, were almost exterminated in this most unexpected defeat. An unsuccessful attack upon Granville more than counterbalanced this advantage, and although the Vendéans afterwards obtained a brilliant victory at Dol, it was the last success of what was termed the Great Army of La Vendée, and which well deserved that title, on more accounts than in its more ordinary sense. They had now lost, by the chances of war, most of their best chiefs; and misfortunes, and the exasperating feelings attending them, had introduced disunion, which had been so long a stranger to their singular association. Charette was reflected upon as being little willing to aid La Roche-Jacquelein; and Stoffet seems to have set up an independent standard. The insurgents were defeated at Mons, where of three Republican Generals of name, Westerman, Marceau, and Kleber, the first disgraced himself by savage cruelty, and the other two gained honour by their clemency. Fifteen thousand male and female natives of La Vendée perished in the battle and the massacre which ensued.

But though La Vendée, after this decisive loss, which included some of her best troops and bravest generals, could hardly be said to exist, La Charette continued, with indefatigable diligence, and undaunted courage, to sustain the insurrection of Lower Poitou and Bretagne. He was followed by a division of peasants from the Marais, whose activity in marshy grounds gave them similar advantages to those possessed by the Vendéans in their woodlands. He was followed also by the inhabitants of Morbihan, called, from their adherence to royalism, the Little La Vendée. He was the leader, besides, of many of the bands called Chouans, a name of doubtful origin given to the insurgents of Bretagne, but which their courage has rendered celebrated.* La Charette himself, who, with these and other forces, continued to sustain the standard of royalty in Bretagne and Poitou, was one of those extraordinary characters, made to shine amidst difficulties and dangers. As prudent and cautious as he was courageous and adventurous, he was at the same time so alert and expeditious in his motions, that he usually appeared at the time and place where his presence was least expected and most formidable. A Republican officer, who had just taken possession of a village, and was speaking of the Royalist leader as of a person at twenty leagues' distance, said publicly,—“I should like to see this famous Charette.”—“There he is,” said a woman, pointing with her finger. In fact, he was at that moment in the act of charging the Republican troops, who were all either slain or made prisoners.

* Some derived it from *Chat-huant*, as if the insurgents, like owls, appeared chiefly at night—others traced it to *Chouin*, the name of two brothers, said to have been the earliest leaders of the Breton insurgents.

After the fall of Robespierre, the Convention made offers of pacification to La Charette, which were adjusted betwixt the Vendean chief and General Canclaux, the heroic defender of Nantes. The articles of treaty were subscribed in that place, which La Charette entered at the head of his military staff, with his long white plume streaming in the wind. He heard with coldness shouts of welcome from a city, to which his name had been long a terror; and there was a gloom on his brow as he signed his name to the articles agreed upon. He certainly suspected the faith of those with whom he transacted, and they did not by any means confide in his. An armistice was agreed on until the Convention should ratify the pacification. But this never took place. Mutual complaints and recriminations followed, and the soldiers of La Charette and of the Republic began once more to make a petty war on each other.

Meantime, that party in the British cabinet which declared for a descent on France, in name and on behalf of the successor to the crown, had obtained the acquiescence of their colleagues in an experiment of this nature; but unhappily it had been postponed until its success had become impossible. The force, too, which composed this experimental operation, was injudiciously selected. A certain proportion consisted of emigrants, in whom the highest confidence might be with justice reposed; but about two battalions of this invading expedition were vagrant foreigners of various descriptions, many or most of them enlisted from among the prisoners of war, who readily took any engagement to get out of captivity, with the mental resolution of breaking it the first opportunity. Besides these imprudences, the purpose and time of executing a project, which, to be successful, should have been secret and sudden, were generally known in France and England before the expedition weighed anchor.

The event, as is universally known, was most disastrous: The mercenaries deserted to the Republicans as soon as they got ashore; and the unfortunate emigrants, who became prisoners in great numbers, were condemned and executed without mercy. The ammunition and muskets, of which a quantity had been landed, fell into the hands of the enemy; and what was worse, England did not, among other lighter losses, entirely save her honour. She was severely censured as giving up her allies to destruction, because she had yielded to the wishes which enthusiastic and courageous men had elevated into hope.

Nothing, indeed, can be more difficult, than to state the just extent of support which can prudently be extended by one nation to a civil faction in the bosom of another. Indeed, nothing short of success—absolute success—will prove the justification of such enterprises in the eyes of some, who will allege, in the event of failure, that men have been enticed into perils, in which they have not been adequately supported; or of others, who will condemn such measures as squandering the public resources, in enterprises which ought not to have been encouraged at all. But in fair judgment, the expedition of Quiberon ought not to be summarily condemned. It was neither inadequate, nor, excepting as to the description of some of the forces employed, ill calculated for the service proposed. Had such reinforcements and supplies arrived while the Royalists were attacking Nantes or Grenoble, or while they yet held the island of Noirmoutier, the good consequences to the royal cause might have been incalculable. But the expedition was ill-timed, and that was in a great measure owing to those unfortunate gentlemen engaged, who, impatient of inactivity, and sanguine by character, urged the British ministry, or rather Mr Windham, to authorise the experiment, without fully considering more than their own zeal and courage. We cannot, however, go so far as to say, that their impatience relieved ministers from the responsibility attached to the indifferent intelligence on which they acted. There could be no difficulty in getting full information on the state of Bretagne by way of Jersey; and they ought to have

known that there was a strong French force collected from various garrisons, for the purpose of guarding against a descent at Quiberon.*

After this unfortunate affair, and some subsequent vain attempts to throw in supplies on the part of the English, La Charette still continued in open war. But Hoche, an officer of high reputation, was now sent into the disturbed districts, with a larger army than had yet been employed against them. He was thus enabled to form moveable columns, which acted in concert, supporting each other when unsuccessful, or completing each other's victory when such was obtained. La Charette, after his band was almost entirely destroyed, was himself made prisoner. Being condemned to be shot, he refused to have his eyes covered, and died as courageously as he had lived. With him and Stofflet, who suffered a similar fate, the war of La Vendée terminated.

To trace this remarkable civil war, even so slightly as we have attempted the task, has carried us beyond the course of our narrative. It broke out in the beginning of March 1793, and La Charette's execution, by which it was closed, took place at Nantes, 9th March 1796. The astonishing part of the matter is, that so great a conflagration should not have extended itself beyond a certain limited district, while within that region it raged with such fury, that for a length of time no means of extinguishing it could be discovered.

We now return to the state of France in spring 1793, when the Jacobins, who had possessed themselves of the supreme power of the Republic, found that they had to contend, not only with the Allied Forces on two frontiers of France, and with the Royalists in the west, but also with more than one of the great commercial towns, which, with less inclination to the monarchical cause, than a general terror of revolutionary measures, prepared for resistance after the proscription of the Girondists upon the 31st of May.

Bordeaux, Marseilles, Toulon, and Lyons, had declared themselves against the Jacobin supremacy. Rich from commerce and their maritime situation, and, in the case of Lyons, from their command of internal navigation, the wealthy merchants and manufacturers of those cities foresaw the total insecurity of property, and in consequence their own ruin, in the system of arbitrary spoliation and murder upon which the government of the Jacobins was founded. But property, for which they were solicitous, though, if its natural force is used in time, the most powerful barrier to withstand revolution, becomes, after a certain period of delay, its most helpless victim. If the rich are in due season liberal of their means, they have the power of enlisting in their cause, and as adherents, those among the lower orders, who, if they see their superiors dejected and despairing, will be tempted to consider them as objects of plunder. But this must be done early, or those who might be made the most active defenders of property will join with such as are prepared to make a prey of it.

We have already seen that Bordeaux, in which the Brissotines or Girondists had ventured to hope for a zeal purely republican, at once adverse to Royalty and to Jacobin domination, had effectually disappointed their expectations, and succumbed with little struggle under the ferocious victors.

Marseilles showed at once her good will and her impotency of means. The utmost exertions of that wealthy city, whose revolutionary band had con-

*. We can and ought to make great allowances for national feeling; yet it is a little hard to find a well-informed historian, like Monsieur Lacretelle, gravely insinuate that England threw the unfortunate Royalists on the coast of Quiberon to escape the future burthen of maintaining them. Her liberality towards the emigrants, honourable and meritorious to the country, was entirely gratuitous. She might have withdrawn when she pleased a bounty conferred by her benevolence; and it is rather too hard to be supposed capable of meditating their murder, merely to save the expense of supporting them. The expedition was a blunder, but one in which the unfortunate sufferers contributed to mislead the British government.

tributed so much to the downfall of the monarchy in the attack on the Tuileries, were able to equip only a small and doubtful army of about 3000 men, who were despatched to the relief of Lyons. This inconsiderable army threw themselves into Avignon, and were defeated with the utmost ease, by the republican general Cartaux, despicable as a military officer, and whose forces would not have stood a single *egaillement* of the Vendean sharp-shooters. Marseilles received the victors, and bowed her head to the subsequent horrors which it pleased Cartaux, with two formidable Jacobins, Barras and Ferron, to inflict on that flourishing city. The place underwent the usual terrors of Jacobin purification, and was for a time affectedly called, "the nameless commune."

Lyons made a more honourable stand. That noble city had been subjected for some time to the domination of Chalier, one of the most ferocious, and at the same time one of the most extravagantly absurd, of the Jacobins. He was at the head of a formidable club, which was worthy of being affiliated with the mother society, and ambitious of treading in its footsteps; and he was supported by a garrison of two revolutionary regiments, besides a numerous artillery, and a large addition of volunteers, amounting in all to about ten thousand men, forming what was called a revolutionary army. This Chalier was an apostate priest, an atheist, and a thorough-paced pupil in the school of terror. He had been created Procureur of the Community, and had imposed on the wealthy citizens a tax, which was raised from six to thirty millions of livres. But blood as well as gold was his object. The massacre of a few priests and aristocrats confined in the fortress of Pierre-Scize, was a pitiful sacrifice; and Chalier, ambitious of deeds more decisive, caused a general arrest of an hundred principal citizens, whom he destined as a hecatomb more worthy of the demon whom he served.

This sacrifice was prevented by the courage of the Lyonnois; a courage which, if assumed by the Parisians, might have prevented most of the horrors which disgraced the Revolution. The meditated slaughter was already announced by Chalier to the Jacobin Club. "Three hundred heads," he said, "are marked for slaughter. Let us lose no time in seizing the members of the departmental office-bearers, the presidents and secretaries of the sections, all the local authorities who obstruct our revolutionary measures. Let us make one faggot of the whole, and deliver them at once to the guillotine."

But ere he could execute his threat, terror was awakened into the courage of despair. The citizens rose in arms and besieged the Hotel de Ville, in which Chalier, with his revolutionary troops, made a desperate, and for some time a successful, yet ultimately a vain defence.* But the Lyonnois unhappily knew not how to avail themselves of their triumph. They were not sufficiently aware of the nature of the vengeance which they had provoked, or of the necessity of supporting the bold step which they had taken, by measures which precluded a compromise. Their resistance to the violence and atrocity of the Jacobins had no political character, any more than that offered by the traveller against robbers who threaten him with plunder and murder. They were not sufficiently aware, that, having done so much, they must necessarily do more. They ought, by declaring themselves Royalists, to have endeavoured to prevail on the troops of Savoy, if not on the Swiss, (who had embraced a species of neutrality, which, after the 10th of August, was dishonourable to their ancient reputation,) to send in all haste soldiery to the assistance of a city which had no fortifications or regular troops to defend it; but which possessed, nevertheless, treasures to pay their auxiliaries, and strong hands and able officers to avail themselves of the localities of their situation, which, when well defended, are sometimes as formidable as the regular protection erected by scientific engineers.

The people of Lyons vainly endeavoured to establish a revolutionary charac-

* 29th May, 1793.

ter for themselves, upon the system of the Gironde; two of whose proscribed deputies tried to draw them over to their unpopular and hopeless cause: and they inconsistently sought protection by affecting a republican zeal, even while resisting the decrees, and defeating the troops, of the Jacobins. There were undoubtedly many of Royalist principles among the insurgents, and some of their leaders were decidedly such; but these were not numerous or influential enough to establish the true principle of open resistance, and the ultimate chance of rescue, by a bold proclamation of the King's interest. They still appealed to the Convention as their legitimate sovereign, in whose eyes they endeavoured to vindicate themselves, and at the same time tried to secure the interest of two Jacobin deputies, who had countenanced every violence attempted by Châlier, that they might prevail upon them to represent their conduct favourably. Of course they had enough of promises to this effect, while Messrs. Guathier and Nioche, the deputies in question, remained in their power; promises, doubtless, the more readily given, that the Lyonnois, though desirous to conciliate the favour of the Convention, did not hesitate in proceeding to the punishment of the Jacobin Châlier. He was condemned and executed, along with one of his principal associates, termed Reard.

To defend these vigorous proceedings, the unhappy insurgents placed themselves under the interim government of a council, who, still desirous to temporize and maintain the Revolutionary character, termed themselves "The Popular and Republican Commission of Public Safety of the Department of the Rhine and Loire;" a title which, while it excited no popular enthusiasm, and attracted no foreign aid, no ways soothed, but rather exasperated, the resentment of the Convention, now under the absolute domination of the Jacobins, by whom everything short of complete fraternization was accounted presumptuous defiance. Those who were not with them, it was their policy to hold as their most decided enemies.

The Lyonnois had indeed letters of encouragement, and promised concurrence, from several departments; but no effectual support was ever directed towards their city, excepting the petty reinforcement from Marseilles, which we have seen was intercepted and dispersed with little trouble by the Jacobin General Cartaux.

Lyons had expected to become the patroness and focus of an Anti-jacobin league, formed by the great commercial towns, against Paris and the predominant part of the Convention. She found herself isolated and unsupported, and left to oppose her own proper forces and means of defence, to an army of sixty thousand men, and to the numerous Jacobins contained within her own walls. About the end of July, after a lapse of an interval of two months, a regular blockade was formed around the city, and in the first week of August hostilities took place. The besieging army was directed in its military character by General Kellerman, who, with other distinguished soldiers, had now begun to hold an eminent rank in the Republican armies. But for the purpose of executing the vengeance for which they thirsted, the Jacobins relied chiefly on the exertions of the deputies they had sent along with the commander, and especially of the representative Dubois Crancé, a man whose sole merit appears to have been his frantic Jacobinism. General Precy, formerly an officer in the royal service, undertook the almost hopeless task of defence, and by forming redoubts on the most commanding situations around the town, commenced a resistance against the immensely superior force of the besiegers, which was honourable if it could have been useful. The Lyonnois, at the same time, still endeavoured to make fair weather with the besieging army, by representing themselves as firm Republicans. They celebrated as a public festival the anniversary of the 10th of August, while Dubois Crancé, to show the credit he gave them for their republican zeal, fixed the same day for commencing his fire on the place, and caused the first gun to be discharged by his own concubine, a

Female born in Lyons. Bombs and red-hot bullets were next resorted to, against the second city of the French empire; while the besieged sustained the attack with a constancy, and on many parts repelled it with a courage, highly honourable to their character.

But their fate was determined. The deputies announced to the Convention their purpose of pouring their instruments of havoc on every quarter of the town at once, and when it was on fire in several places to attempt a general storm. "The city," they said, "must surrender, or there shall not remain one stone upon another, and this we hope to accomplish in spite of the suggestions of false compassion. Do not then be surprised when you shall hear that Lyons exists no longer." The fury of the attack threatened to make good these promises.

In the mean time the Piedmontese troops made a show of descending from their mountains to the succour of the city, and it is probable their interference would have given a character of royalism to the insurrection. But the incursion of the Piedmontese and Sardinians was speedily repelled by the skill of Kellerman, and produced no effect in favour of the city of Lyons, except that of supporting for a time the courage of its defenders.

The sufferings of the citizens became intolerable. Several quarters of the city were on fire at the same time, immense magazines were burnt to the ground, and a loss incurred, during two nights' bombardment, which was calculated at two hundred millions of livres. A black flag was hoisted by the besieged on the Great Hospital, as a sign that the fire of the assailants should not be directed on that asylum of hopeless misery. The signal seemed only to draw the Republican bombs to the spot where they could create the most frightful distress, and outrage in the highest degree the feelings of humanity. The devastations of famine were soon added to those of slaughter; and after two months of such horrors had been sustained, it became obvious that farther resistance was impossible.

The military commandant of Lyons, Precy, resolved upon a sally, at the head of the active part of the garrison, hoping that, by cutting his way through the besiegers, he might save the lives of many of those who followed him in the desperate attempt, and gain the neutral territory of Switzerland, while the absence of those who had been actual combatants during the siege, might, in some degree, incline the Convention to lenient measures towards the more helpless part of the inhabitants. A column of about two thousand men made this desperate attempt. But pursued by the Republicans, and attacked on every side by the peasants, to whom they had been represented in the most odious colours by the Jacobin deputies, and who were stimulated besides by the hope of plunder, scarcely fifty of the devoted body reached, with their leader, the protecting soil of Switzerland. Lyons reluctantly opened her gates after the departure of her best and bravest. The rest may be described in the words of Horace,—

*"Barbarus heu cineres insistet victor, et urbem,
dissipabit insolens."*

The paralytic Couthon, with Collot D'Herbois, and other deputies, were sent to Lyons by the Committee of Public Safety, to execute the vengeance which the Jacobins demanded; while Dubois Crancé was recalled, for having put, it was thought, less energy in his proceedings than the prosecution of the siege required. Collot D'Herbois had a personal motive of a singular nature for delighting in the task intrusted to him and his colleagues. In his capacity of a playactor, he had been hissed from the stage at Lyons, and the door to revenge was now open. The instructions of this committee enjoined them to take the most satisfactory revenge for the death of Châlier, and the insurrection of Lyons, not merely on the citizens, but on the town itself. The principal streets and buildings were to be levelled with the ground, and a monument erected

where they stood, was to record the cause ;—“ *Lyons rebelled against the Republic—Lyons is no more.*” Such fragments of the town as might be permitted to remain, were to bear the name of Ville Affranchie. It will scarce be believed, that a doom like that which might have passed the lips of some Eastern despot, in all the frantic madness of arbitrary power and utter ignorance, could have been seriously pronounced, and as seriously enforced, in one of the most civilized nations in Europe ; and that in the present enlightened age, men who pretended to wisdom and philosophy, should have considered the labours of the architect as a proper subject of punishment. So it was, however ; and to give the demolition more effect, the impotent Couthon was carried from house to house, devoting each to ruin, by striking the door with a silver hammer, and pronouncing these words—“ House of a rebel, I condemn thee in the name of the Law.” Workmen followed in great multitudes, who executed the sentence by pulling the house down to the foundations. This wanton demolition continued for six months, and is said to have been carried on at an expense equal to that which the superb military hospital, the Hotel des Invalides, cost its founder, Louis XIV. But Republican vengeance did not waste itself exclusively upon senseless lime and stone—it sought out sentient victims.

The deserved death of Chalier had been atoned by an apotheosis, executed after Lyons had surrendered ; but Collot D’Herbois declared that every drop of that patriotic blood fell as if scalding his own heart, and that the murder demanded atonement. All ordinary process, and every usual mode of execution, was thought too tardy to avenge the death of a Jacobin proconsul. The judges of the revolutionary commission were worn out with fatigue—the arm of the executioner was weary—the very steel of the guillotine was blunted. Collot d’Herbois devised a more summary mode of slaughter. A number of from two to three hundred victims at once were dragged from prison to the Place de Brotteaux, one of the largest squares in Lyons, and there subjected to a fire of grape-shot. Efficacious as this mode of execution may seem, it was neither speedy nor merciful. The sufferers fell to the ground like singed flies, mutilated but not slain, and imploring their executioners to despatch them speedily. This was done with sabres and bayonets, and with such haste and zeal, that some of the jailors and assistants were slain along with those whom they had assisted in dragging to death ; and the mistake was not discerned, until, upon counting the dead bodies, the military murderers found them amount to more than the destined tale. The bodies of the dead were thrown into the Rhone, to carry news of the Republican vengeance, as Collot d’Herbois expressed himself, to Toulon, then also in a state of revolt. But the sullen stream rejected the office imposed on it, and heaved back the dead in heaps upon the banks ; and the Committee of Representatives was compelled at length to allow the relics of their cruelty to be interred, to prevent the risk of contagion.

The people of the south of France have always been distinguished by the vivacity of their temperament. As cruelties beget retaliation, it may be as well here mentioned, that upon the fall of the Jacobins, the people of Lyons forgot not what indeed was calculated for eternal remembrance, and took by violence a severe and sanguinary vengeance on those who had been accessory to the atrocities of Couthon and Collot d’Herbois. They rose on the Jacobins after the fall of Robespierre, and put to death several of them.

Toulon, important by its port, its arsenals, and naval-yard, as well as by its fortifications both on the sea and land side, had partaken deeply in the feelings which pervaded Marseilles, Bourdeaux, and Lyons. But the insurgents of Toulon were determinedly royalist. The place had been for some time subjected to the administration of a Jacobin Club, and had seen the usual quantity of murders and excesses with the greater pain, that the town contained many naval officers and others who had served under the King, and retained their affection for the royal cause. Their dissatisfaction did not escape the notice

of men, to whom every sullen look was cause of suspicion, and the slightest cause of suspicion a ground of death. The town being threatened with a complete purification after the Jacobin fashion, the inhabitants resolved to anticipate the blow.

At the dead of night the tocsin was sounded by the citizens, who dispersed the Jacobin Club, seized on the two representatives who had governed its proceedings, arrested seven or eight Jacobins, who had been most active in the previous assassinations, and, in spite of some opposition, actually executed them. With more decision than the inhabitants of Lyons, they proceeded to proclaim Louis XVII. under the constitution of 1791. Cartaux presently marched upon the insurgent city, driving before him the Marseillois, whom, as before-mentioned, he had defeated upon their march towards Lyons. Alarmed at this movement, and destitute of a garrison which they could trust, the Toulonnois implored the assistance of the English and Spanish Admirals, Lord Hood and Gravina, who were cruising off their port. It was instantly granted, and marines were sent on shore for their immediate protection, while efforts were made to collect from the different allied powers such a supply of troops, as could be immediately thrown into the place. But the event of the siege of Toulon brings our general historical sketch into connexion with the life of that wonderful person, whose actions we have undertaken to record. It was during this siege that the light was first distinguished, which, broadening more and more, and blazing brighter and brighter, was at length to fill with its lustre the whole hemisphere of Europe, and was then to set with a rapidity equal to that with which it had arisen.

Ere, however, we produce this first-rate actor upon the stage, we must make the reader still more particularly acquainted with the spirit of the scene.

CHAPTER XVI.

Views of the British Cabinet regarding the French Revolution.—Extraordinary Situation of France.—Explanation of the Anomaly which it exhibited.—System of Terror.—Committee of Public Safety—Of Public Security.—David the Painter.—Law against suspected Persons.—Revolutionary Tribunal.—Effects of the Emigration of the Princes and Nobles.—Causes of the Passiveness of the French People under the Tyranny of the Jacobins.—Singular Address of the Committee of Public Safety.—General Reflections.

It has been a maxim with great statesmen, that evil governments must end by becoming their own destruction, according to the maxim, *Res nolunt diu male administrari*. Pitt himself was of opinion, that the fury of the French Revolution would wear itself out; and that it already presented so few of the advantages and privileges of social compact, that it seemed as if its political elements must either altogether dissolve, or assume a new form more similar to that on which all other states and governments rest their stability. It was on this account that this great English statesman declined assisting, in plain and open terms, the royal cause, and desired to keep England free from any pledge concerning the future state of government in France, aware of the danger of involving her in any declared and avowed interference with the right of a people to choose their own system. However anxious to prevent the revolutionary opinions, as well as arms, from extending beyond their own frontier, it was thought in the British cabinet, by one large party, that the present frantic excess of republican principles must, of itself, produce a reaction in favour of more moderate sentiments. Some steady system for the protection of life and property, was, it was said, essential to the very existence of society. The French

nation must assume such, and renounce the prosecution of those revolutionary doctrines, for the sake of their own as well as of other countries. The arrangement must, it was thought, take place, from the inevitable course of human affairs, which, however they may fluctuate, are uniformly determined at length by the interest of the parties concerned.

Such was the principle assumed by many great statesmen, whose sagacity was unhappily baffled by the event. In fact, it was calculating upon the actions and personal exertions of a raving madman, as if he had been under the regulation of his senses, and acting upon principles of self-regard and self-preservation. France continued not only to subsist, but to be victorious, without a government, unless the Revolutionary Committees and Jacobin Clubs could be accounted such—for the Convention was sunk into a mere engine of that party, and sanctioned whatever they proposed; without religion, which, as we shall see, they formally abolished; without municipal laws or rights, except that any one of the ruling party might do what mischief he would, while citizens, less distinguished for patriotism, were subjected, for any cause, or no cause, to loss of liberty, property, and life itself; without military discipline, for officers might be dragged from their regiments, and generals from their armies, on the information of their own soldiers; without revenues of state, for the depression of the assignats was extreme; without laws, for there were no ordinary tribunals left to appeal to; without colonies, ships, manufactories, or commerce; without fine arts, any more than those which were useful;—In short, France continued to subsist, and to achieve victories, although apparently forsaken of God, and deprived of all the ordinary resources of human wisdom.

The whole system of society, indeed, appeared only to retain some appearances of cohesion from mere habit, the same which makes trained horses draw up in something like order, even without their riders, if the trumpet is sounded. And yet in foreign wars, notwithstanding the deplorable state of the interior, the Republic was not only occasionally, but permanently and triumphantly victorious. She was like the champion in Berni's romance, who was so delicately sliced asunder by one of the Paladins, that he went on fighting, and slew other warriors, without discovering for a length of time that he was himself killed.

All this extraordinary energy, was, in one word, the effect of TERROR. Death—a grave—are sounds which awaken the strongest efforts in those whom they menace. There was never anywhere, save in France during this melancholy period, so awful a comment on the expression of Scripture, "All that a man hath he will give for his life." Force, immediate and irresistible force, was the only logic used by the government—Death was the only appeal from their authority—the guillotine the all-sufficing argument, which settled each debate betwixt them and the governed.

Was the exchequer low, the guillotine filled it with the effects of the wealthy, who were judged aristocratical in exact proportion to the extent of their property. Were these supplies insufficient, diminished as they were by speculation ere they reached the public coffers, the assignats remained, which might be multiplied to any quantity. Did the paper medium of circulation fall in the market to fifty under the hundred, the guillotine was ready to punish those who refused to exchange it at par. A few examples of such jobbers in the public funds made men glad to give one hundred francs for state money, which they knew to be worth no more than fifty. Was bread wanting, corn was to be found by the same compendious means, and distributed among the Parisians, as among the ancient citizens of Rome, at a regulated price. The guillotine was a key to storehouses, barns, and granaries.

Did the army want recruits, the guillotine was ready to exterminate all conscripts who should hesitate to march. On the generals of the Republican army, this decisive argument, which, *à priori*, might have been deemed less applicable, in all its rigour, to them than to others, was possessed of the most exclusive au-

authority. They were beheaded for want of success, which may seem less different from the common course of affairs;* but they were also guillotined when their successes were not improved to the full expectations of their masters.† Nay, they were guillotined, when, being too successful, they were suspected of having acquired over the soldiers who had conquered under them, an interest dangerous to those who had the command of this all-sufficing reason of state.‡ Even mere mediocrity, and a limited but regular discharge of duty, neither so brilliant as to incur jealousy, nor so important as to draw down censure, was no protection.§ There was no rallying point against this universal, and very simple system—of main force.

The Vendéans, who tried the open and manly mode of generous and direct resistance, were, as we have seen, finally destroyed, leaving a name which will live for ages. The commercial towns, which, upon a scale more modified, also tried their strength with the revolutionary torrent, were successively overpowered. One can, therefore, be no more surprised that the rest of the nation gave way to predominant force, than we are daily at seeing a herd of strong and able-bodied cattle driven to the shambles before one or two butchers, and as many bull-dogs. As the victims approach the slaughter-house, and smell the blood of those which have suffered the fate to which they are destined, they may be often observed to hesitate, start, roar, and bellow, and intimate their dread of the fatal spot, and instinctive desire to escape from it; but the cudgels of their drivers, and the fangs of the mastiffs, seldom fail to compel them forward, slaving, and snorting, and trembling, to the destiny which awaits them.

The power of exercising this tremendous authority over a terrified nation, was vested in few hands, and rested on a very simple basis.

The Convention had, after the fall of the Girondists, remained an empty show of what it had once some title to call itself,—the Representative Body of the French Nation. The members belonging to the Plain, who had observed a timid neutrality betwixt The Mountain and the Girondists, if not without talent, were without courage to make any opposition to the former when triumphant. They crouched to their fate, were glad to escape in silence, and to yield full passage to the revolutionary torrent. They consoled themselves with the usual apology of weak minds—that they submitted to what they could not prevent; and their adversaries, while despising them, were yet tolerant of their presence, and somewhat indulgent to their scruples, because, while these timid neutrals remained in their ranks, they furnished to the eye at least the appearance of a full Senate, filled the ranks of the Representative Body as a garment is stuffed out to the required size by huckram, and countenanced by their passive acquiescence the measures which they most detested in their hearts. It was worth the while of The Mountain to endure the imbecility of such associates, and even to permit occasionally some diffident opposition on their part, had it only been to preserve appearances, and afford a show of a free assembly debating on the affairs of the nation. Thus, although the name of the National Convention was generally used, its deputies, carefully selected from the Jacobin or ruling party, were everywhere acting in their name, with all the authority of Roman proconsuls; while two-thirds of the body sat with submitted necks and pad-

* The fate of Custine illustrates this,—a general who had done much for the Republic, and who, when his fortune began to fail him, excused himself by saying, Fortune was a woman, and his hairs were growing grey.

† Witness Houchard, who performed the distinguished service of raising the siege of Dunkirk, and who, during his trial, could be hardly made to understand that he was to suffer for not carrying his victory still farther.

‡ Several generals of reputation sustained capital punishment, from no other reason than the jealousy of the committees of their influence with the army.

§ Luckner, an old German thick-headed soldier, who was of no party, and scrupulously obeyed the command of whichever was uppermost at Paris, had no better fate than others.

locked lips, unresisting slaves to the minor proportion, which again, under its various fierce leaders, was beginning to wage a civil war within its own limited circle.

But the young reader, to whom this eventful history is a novelty, may ask in what hands was the real power of the government lodged, of which the Convention, considered as a body, was thus effectually deprived, though permitted to retain, like the apparition in Macbeth,—

“—— upon its baby brow the round
And type of sovereignty.”

France had, indeed, in 1793, accepted, with the usual solemnities, a new constitution, which was stated to rest on the right republican basis, and was alleged to afford, of course, the most perfect and absolute security for liberty and equality, that the nation could desire. But this constitution was entirely superseded in practice by the more compendious mode of governing by means of a junta, selected out of the Convention itself, without observing any farther ceremony. In fact, two small Committees, vested with the full powers of the state, exercised the powers of a dictatorship, while the representatives of the people, like the senate under the Roman empire, retained the form and semblance of supreme power, might keep their curule chairs, and enjoy the dignity of fasces and lictors, but had in their possession and exercise scarcely the independent powers of an English vestry, or quarter-sessions.

The Committee of Public Safety dictated every measure of the Convention, or more frequently acted without deigning to consult the Legislative Body at all. The number of members who exerted this executive government fluctuated betwixt ten and twelve; and, as they were all chosen Jacobins, and selected as men capable of going all the lengths of their party, care was taken, by re-elections from time to time, to render the situation permanent. This body deliberated in secret, and had the despotic right of interfering with and controlling every other authority in the state; and before its absolute powers, and the uses which were made of them, the Council of Ten of the Venetian government might be thought a harmless and liberal institution. Another Committee, with powers of the same revolutionary nature, and in which the members were also renewed from time to time, was that of Public Security. It was inferior in importance to that of Public Safety, but was nevertheless as active within its sphere. We regret to record of a man of genius, that David, the celebrated painter,* held a seat in the Committee of Public Security. The fine arts, which he studied, had not produced on his mind the softening and humanising effect ascribed to them. Frightfully ugly in his exterior, his mind seemed to correspond with the harshness of his looks. “Let us grind enough of the Red,” was the professional phrase of which he made use, when sitting down to the bloody work of the day.

That these revolutionary Committees might have in their hands a power subject to no legal defence or evasion on the part of the accused, Merlin of Douay, a lawyer, it is said, of eminence, framed what was termed the law against suspected persons, which was worded with so much ingenuity, that not only it enveloped every one who, by birth, friendship, habits of life, dependencies, or other ties, was linked, however distantly, with aristocracy, whether of birth or property, but also all who had, in the various changes and phases of the Revolution, taken one step too few in the career of the most violent patriotism, or had, though it were but for one misguided and doubtful moment, held opinions short of the most extravagant Jacobinism. This crime of suspicion was of the nature of theameleon; it derived its peculiar shade or colour from the person

* David is generally allowed to have possessed great merit as a draughtsman. Foreigners do not admire his composition and colouring so much as his countrymen.

to whom it attached for the moment. To have been a priest, or even an assertor of the rights and doctrines of Christianity, was fatal; but in some instances, an overflow of atheistical blasphemy was equally so. To be silent on public affairs, betrayed a culpable indifference; but it incurred darker suspicion to speak of them otherwise than in the most violent tone of the ruling party. By a supplementary law, this spider's web was so widely extended, that it appeared no fly could be found insignificant enough to escape its meshes. Its general propositions were of a nature so vague, that it was impossible they could ever be made subjects of evidence. Therefore they were assumed without proof; and at length, definition of the characteristics of suspicion seems to have been altogether dispensed with, and all those were suspected persons whom the revolutionary committees and their assistants chose to hold as such.

The operation of this law was terrible. A suspected person, besides being thrown into prison, was deprived of all his rights, his effects sealed up, his property placed under care of the state, and he himself considered as civilly dead. If the unfortunate object of suspicion had the good fortune to be set at liberty, it was no security whatever against his being again arrested on the day following. There was, indeed, no end to the various shades of sophistry which brought almost every kind of person under this oppressive law, so ample was its scope, and undefined its objects.

That the administrators of this law of suspicion might not have too much trouble in seeking for victims, all householders were obliged to publish on the outside of their doors a list of the names and description of their inmates. Domestic security, the most precious of all rights to a people who know what freedom really is, was violated on every occasion, even the slightest, by domiciliary visits. The number of arrests which took place through France, choked the prisons anew which had been so fearfully emptied on the 2d and 3d of September, and is said to have been only moderately computed at three hundred thousand souls, one-third of whom were women. The Jacobins, however, found a mode of jail-delivery less summary than by direct massacre; although differing so little from it in every other respect, that a victim might have had pretty nearly the same chance of a fair trial before Maillard and his men of September, as from the Revolutionary Tribunal. It requires an effort even to write that word, from the extremities of guilt and horror which it recalls. But it is the lot of humanity to record its own greatest disgraces; and it is a wholesome and humbling lesson to exhibit a just picture of those excesses, of which, in its unassisted movements, and when agitated by evil and misguiding passions, human nature can be rendered capable.

The extraordinary criminal Court, better known by the name of the Revolutionary Tribunal, was first instituted upon the motion of Danton. Its object was to judge of state crimes, plots, and attempts against liberty, or in favour of royalty, or affecting the rights and liberty of man, or in any way, more or less, tending to counteract the progress of the Revolution. In short, it was the business of this Court to execute the laws, or inflict the sentence rather, upon such as had been arrested as suspected persons; and they generally saw room to punish in most of the instances where the arresting functionaries had seen ground for imprisonment.

This frightful Court consisted of six judges or public accusers, and two assistants. There were twelve jurymen; but the appointment of these was a mere mockery. They were official persons, who held permanent appointments; had a salary from the state; and were in no manner liable to the choice or challenge of the party tried. It may be sure the jurors and judges were selected for their Republican zeal and steady qualities, and were capable of seeing no obstacle either of law or humanity in the path of their duty. This tribunal had the power of deciding without proof,—or cutting short evidence when in the progress of being adduced,—or stopping the defence of the prisoners at pleasure;

privileges which tended greatly to shorten the forms of court, and aid the despatch of business.

The Revolutionary Tribunal was in a short time so overwhelmed with work, that it became necessary to divide it into four sections, all armed with similar powers. The quantity of blood which it caused to be shed was something unheard of even during the proscriptions of the Roman Empire; and there were involved in its sentences crimes the most different, personages the most opposed, and opinions the most dissimilar. When Henry VIII. roused the fires of Smithfield both against Protestant and Papist, burning at the same stake one wretch for denying the King's supremacy, and another for disbelieving the divine presence in the Eucharist, the association was consistency itself compared to the scenes presented at the Revolutionary Tribunal, in which Royalist, Constitutionalist, Girondist, Churchman, Theophilanthropist, Noble and Roturier, Prince and Peasant, both sexes and all ages, were involved in one general massacre, and sent to execution by scores together, and on the same sledge.

Supporting by their numerous associations the government as exercised by the Revolutionary Committees, came the mass of Jacobins, who, divided into a thousand clubs, emanating from that which had its meetings at Paris, formed the strength of the party to which they gave the name.

The sole principle of the Jacobinical institutions was to excite against all persons who had anything to lose, the passions of those who possessed no property, and were, by birth and circumstances, brutally ignorant, and envious of the advantages enjoyed by the higher classes. All other governments have made individual property the object of countenance and protection; but in this strangely inverted state of things, it seemed the object of constant suspicion and persecution, and exposed the owner to perpetual danger. We have elsewhere said that Equality (unless in the no less intelligible than sacred sense of equal submission to the law) is a mere chimera, which can no more exist with respect to property, than in regard to mental qualifications, or personal strength, beauty, or stature. Divide the whole property of a country equally among its inhabitants, and a week will bring back the inequality which you have endeavoured to remove; nay, a much shorter space will find the industrious and saving richer than the idle and prodigal. But in France, at the period under discussion, this equality, in itself so unattainable, had completely superseded even the principle of liberty, as a watch-word for exciting the people. It was to sin against this leading principle to be possessed of, and more especially to enjoy ostentatiously, anything which was wanting to your neighbour. To be richer, more accomplished, better bred, or better taught, subjected you to the law of suspicion, and you were conducted instantly before a Revolutionary Committee, where you were probably convicted of incivism; not for interfering with the liberty and property of others, but for making what use you pleased of your own.

The whole of the terrible mystery is included in two regulations, communicated by the Jacobin Club of Paris to the Committee of Public Safety.—I. That when, by the machinations of opulent persons, seditions should arise in any district, it should be declared in a state of rebellion.—II. That the Convention shall avail themselves of such opportunity *to excite the poor to make war on the rich*, and to restore order at any price whatsoever.—This was so much understood, that one of the persons tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal, when asked what he had to say in his defence, answered,—“I am wealthy—what avails it to me to offer any exculpation when such is my offence?”

The Committees of Government distributed large sums of money to the Jacobin Club and its affiliated societies, as being necessary to the propagation of sound political principles. The clubs themselves took upon them in every village the exercise of the powers of government; and while they sat swearing, drinking, and smoking, examined passports, imprisoned citizens, and enforced

to their full extent the benefits of liberty and equality. "Death or Fraternity" was usually inscribed over their place of assembly, which some one translated,—"Become my brother, or I will kill thee."

These clubs were composed of members drawn from the lees of the people, that they might not, in their own persons, give an example contradicting the equality which it was their business to enforce. They were filled with men without resources or talents, but towards whom the confidence of the deceived people was directed, from the conviction that, because taken from among themselves, they would have the interest of the lower orders constantly in view. Their secretaries, however, were generally selected with some attention to alertness of capacity; for on them depended the terrible combination which extended from the mother society of Jacobins in Paris, down into the most remote villages of the most distant provinces, in which the same tyranny was maintained by the influence of similar means. Thus rumours could be either circulated or collected with a speed and uniformity, which enabled a whisper from Robespierre to regulate the sentiments of the Jacobins at the most distant part of his empire; for his it unquestionably was, for the space of two dreadful years.

France had been subjected to many evils ere circumstances had for a time reduced her to this state of passive obedience to a yoke, which, after all, when its strength was fairly tried, proved as brittle as it was intolerable. Those who witnessed the tragedies which then occurred, look back upon that period as the delirium of a national fever, filled with visions too horrible and painful for recollection, and which, being once wiped from the mind, we recall with difficulty and reluctance, and dwell upon with disgust. A long course of events, tending each successively to disorganize society more and more, had unhappily prevented a brave, generous, and accomplished people from combining together in mutual defence. The emigration and forfeiture of the nobles and clergy had deprived the country at once of those higher classes, that right-hand file, who are bred up to hold their lives light if called on to lay them down for religion, or in defence of the rights of their country, or the principles of their own honour or conscience. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom or necessity of emigration, its evils were the same. A high-spirited and generous race of gentry, accustomed to consider themselves as peculiar depositaries of the national honour—a learned and numerous priesthood, the guardians of religious opinion—had been removed from their place, and society was so much the more weak and more ignorant for the want of them. Whether voluntarily abandoning or forcibly driven from the country, the expulsion of so large a mass, belonging entirely to the higher orders, tended instantly to destroy the balance of society, and to throw all power into the hands of the lower class, who, deceived by bad and artful men, abused it to the frightful excess we have described.

We do not mean to say that the emigrants had carried with them beyond the frontiers all the worth and courage of the better classes in France, or that there were not, among men attached to the cause of liberty, many who would have shed their blood to have prevented its abuse. But these had been unhappily, during the progress of the Revolution, divided and subdivided among themselves, were split up into a variety of broken and demolished parties, which had repeatedly suffered proscription; and, what was worse, sustained it from the hand of each other. The Constitutionalist could not safely join in league with the Royalist, or either with the Girondist; and thus there existed no confidence on which a union could be effected, among materials repulsive of each other. There extended besides through France, far and near, that sorrow and sinking of the heart, which prevails amid great national calamities where there is little hope. The state of oppression was so universal, that no one strove to remedy its evils more than they would have struggled to remedy the *malaria* of an infected country. Those who escaped the disorder contented themselves with

their individual safety, without thinking of the general evil as one which human art could remedy, or human courage resist.

Moreover, the Jacobinical rulers had surrounded themselves with such a system of espionage and delation, that the attempt to organize any resistance to their power, would have been in fact to fall inevitably and fatally under their tyranny. If the bold conspirator against this most infernal authority did not bestow his confidence on a false friend or a concealed emissary of the Jacobin party, he was scarce the safer on that account; for if he breathed forth in the most friendly ear anything tending to reflect on the free, happy, and humane government under which he had the happiness to live, his hearer was bound, equally as a hired spy, to carry the purport of the conversation to the constituted authorities—that is, to the Revolutionary Committees or Republican Commissioners; and, above all, to the Committee of Public Safety. Silence on public affairs, and acquiescence in democratic tyranny, became, therefore, matter of little wonder; for men will be long mute, when to indulge the tongue may endanger the head. And thus, in the kingdom which boasts herself most civilized in Europe, and with all that ardour for liberty which seemed but of late to animate every bosom, the general apathy of terror and astonishment, joined to a want of all power of combination, palsied every effort at resistance. They who make national reflections on the French for remaining passive under circumstances so hopeless, should first reflect, that our disposition to prevent or punish crime, and our supposed readiness to resist oppression, have their foundation in a strong confidence in the laws, and in the immediate support which they are sure to receive from the numerous classes who have been trained up to respect them, as protectors of the rich equally and of the poor. But in France the whole system of the administration of justice was in the hands of brutal force; and it is one thing to join in the hue and cry against a murderer, seconded by the willing assistance of a whole population—another to venture upon withstanding him in his den, he at the head of his banditti, the assailant defenceless, excepting in the justice of his cause.

It has further been a natural subject of wonder, not only that the richer and better classes, the avowed objects of Jacobin persecution, were so passively resigned to this frightful tyranny, but also why the French populace, whose general manners are so civilized and so kindly, that they are, on ordinary occasions, the gayest and best-humoured people in Europe, should have so far changed their character as to delight in cruelty, or at least to look on, without expressing disgust, at cruelties perpetrated in their name.

But the state of a people in ordinary times and peaceful occupations, is in every country totally different from the character which they manifest under strong circumstances of excitation. Rousseau says, that no one who sees the ordinary greyhound, the most sportive, gentle, and timid perhaps of the canine race, can form an idea of the same animal pursuing and strangling its screaming and helpless victim. Something of this sort must plead the apology of the French people in the early excesses of the Revolution; and we must remember, that men collected in crowds, and influenced with a sense of wrongs, whether real or imaginary, are acted upon by the enthusiasm of the moment; and are besides in a state of such general and undistinguishing fury, that they adopt, by joining in the clamours and general shouts, deeds of which they hardly witness the import, and which perhaps not one of the assembled multitude out of a thousand would countenance, were that import distinctly felt and known. In the revolutionary massacres and cruelties, there was always an executive power, consisting of a few well-breathed and thorough-paced ruffians, whose hands perpetrated the actions, to which the ignorant vulgar only lent their acclamations.

This species of assentation became less wonderful when instant slaughter, without even the ceremony of inquiry, had been exchanged for some forms, however flimsy and unsubstantial, of regular trial, condemnation, and execution.

These served for a time to satisfy the public mind. The populace saw men dragged to the guillotine, convicted of criminal attempts, as they were informed, against the liberty of the people; and they shouted as at the punishment of their own immediate enemies.

But as the work of death proceeded daily, the people became softened as their passions abated; and the frequency of such sacrifices having removed the odious interest which for a while attended them, the lower classes, whom Robespierre desired most to conciliate, looked on, first with indifference, but afterwards with shame and disgust, and at last with the wish to put an end to cruelties, which even the most ignorant and prejudiced began to regard in their own true, undisguised light.

Yet the operation of these universal feelings was long delayed. To support the reign of Terror, the Revolutionary Committees had their own guards and executioners, without whom they could not have long withstood the general abhorrence of mankind. All official situations were scrupulously and religiously filled up by individuals chosen from the Sans-Culottes, who had rendered themselves, by their zeal, worthy of that honourable appellation. Were they of little note, they were employed in the various capacities of guards, officers, and jailors, for which the times created an unwearied demand. Did they hold places in the Convention, they were frequently despatched upon commissions to different parts of France, to give new edge to the guillotine, and superintend in person the punishment of conspiracy or rebellion, real or supposed. Such commissioners, or proconsuls as they were frequently termed, being vested with unlimited power, and fresh in its exercise, signalized themselves by their cruelty, even more than the tyrants whose will they discharged.

We may quote, in illustration, a remarkable passage in an address by the Commissioners of Public Safety, to the representatives absent upon commissions, in which there occur some gentle remarks on their having extended capital punishment to cases where it was not provided by law, although the lustre of their services to the Republic far outshone the shade of such occasional peccadilloes. For their future direction, they are thus exhorted. "Let your energy awaken anew as the term of your labour approaches. The Convention charges you to complete the purification and reorganization of the constituted authorities with the least possible delay, and to report the conclusion of these two operations before the end of the next month. A simple measure may effect the desired purification. *Convoke the people in the popular societies—Let the public functionaries appear before them—Interrogate the people on the subject of their conduct, and let their judgment dictate yours.*"* Thus, the wildest prejudices arising in the Jacobin Club, consisting of the lowest, most ignorant, most prejudiced, and often most malicious members in society, were received as evidence, and the populace declared masters, at their own pleasure, of the property, honour, and life, of those who had held any brief authority over them.

Where there had occurred any positive rising or resistance, the duty of the Commissioners was extended by all the powers that martial law, in other words, the rule of superior force, could confer. We have mentioned the murders committed at Lyons; but even these, though hundreds were swept away by volleys of musket-shot, fell short of the horrors perpetrated by Carrier at Nantes, who, in avenging the Republic on the obstinate resistance of La Vendée, might have summoned hell to match his cruelty, without a demon venturing to answer his challenge. Hundreds, men, women, and children, were forced on board of vessels which were scuttled and sunk in the Loire, and this was called republican baptism. Men and women were stripped, bound together, and thus thrown into the river, and this was called republican marriage. But we have said enough to show that men's blood seems to have been converted into poison,

* *Moniteur*, No. 995; Nivose l'an 2me, 25th December 1793.

and their hearts into stone, by the practices in which they were daily engaged. Many affected even a lust of cruelty, and the instrument of punishment was talked of with the fondness and gaiety with which we speak of a beloved and fondled object. It had its pet name of the Little National Window, and others equally expressive; and although saints were not much in fashion, was, in some degree, canonized by the name of the Holy Mother Guillotine. That active citizen, the Executioner, had also his honours, as well as the senseless machine which he directed. This official was admitted to the society of some of the more emphatic patriots, and, as we shall afterwards see, shared in their civic festivities. It may be questioned whether even *his* company was not too good for the patrons who thus regaled him.

There was also an armed force raised among the most thorough-paced and hardened satellites of the lower order, termed by pre-eminence the Revolutionary Army. They were under the command of Roussin, a general every way worthy of such soldiers. These troops were produced on all occasions, when it was necessary to intimidate the metropolis and the National Guard. They were at the more immediate disposal of the Commune of Paris, and were a ready, though not a great force, which always could be produced at a moment's notice, and were generally joined by the more active democrats, in the capacity of a Jacobin militia. In their own ranks they mustered six thousand men.

It is worthy of remark, that some of the persons whose agency was distinguished during this disgraceful period, and whose hands were deeply dyed in the blood so unrelentingly shed, under whatever phrenzy of brain, or state of a generally maddening impulse, they may have acted, nevertheless made amends in their after conduct for their enormities then committed. This was the case with Tallien, with Barras, with Fouché, Legendre, and others, who, neither good nor scrupulous men, were yet, upon many subsequent occasions, much more humane and moderate than could have been expected from their early acquaintance with revolutionary horrors. They resembled disbanded soldiers, who, returned to their native homes, often resume so entirely the habits of earlier life, that they seem to have forgotten the wild, and perhaps sanguinary character of their military career. We cannot, indeed, pay any of these reformed Jacobins the compliment ascribed to Octavius by the Romans, who found a blessing in the Emperor's benevolent government, which compensated the injuries inflicted by the Triumvir. But it is certain that, had it not been for the courage of Tallien and Barras in particular, it might have been much longer ere the French had been able to rid themselves of Robespierre, and that the revolution of 9th Thermidor, as they called the memorable day of his fall, was in a great measure brought about by the remorse or jealousy of the Dictator's old comrades. But ere we arrive at that more auspicious point of our story, we have to consider the train of causes which led to the downfall of Jacobinism.

Periods which display great national failings or vices, are those also which bring to light distinguished and redeeming virtues. France unfortunately, during the years 1793 and 1794, exhibited instances of extreme cruelty, in principle and practice, which make the human blood curdle. She may also be censured for a certain abasement of spirit, for sinking so long unresistingly under a yoke so unnaturally horrible. But she has to boast that, during this fearful period, she can produce as many instances of the most high and honourable fidelity, of the most courageous and devoted humanity, as honour the annals of any country whatever.

The cruelty of the laws denounced the highest penalties against those who relieved proscribed fugitives. These were executed with the most merciless vigour. Madame Boucquey and her husband were put to death at Bourdeaux for affording shelter to the members of the Gironde faction; and the interdiction

tion of fire and water to outlawed persons, of whatever description, was enforced with the heaviest penalty. Yet, not only among the better classes, but among the poorest of the poor, were there men of noble minds found, who, having but half a morsel to support their own family, divided it willingly with some wretched fugitive, though death stood ready to reward their charity.

In some cases, fidelity and devotion aided the suggestions of humanity. Among domestic servants, a race whose virtues should be the more esteemed, that they are practised sometimes in defiance of strong temptation, were found many distinguished instances of unshaken fidelity. Indeed, it must be said, to the honour of the French manners, that the master and his servant live on a footing of much more kindness than attends the same relation in other countries, and especially in Britain. Even in the most trying situations, there were not many instances of domestic treason, and many a master owed his life to the attachment and fidelity of a menial. The feelings of religion sheltered others. The recusant and exiled priests often found among their former flock the means of concealment and existence, when it was death to administer them. Often, this must have flowed from grateful recollection of their former religious services—sometimes from unmingled veneration for the Being whose ministers they professed themselves.* Nothing short of such heroic exertions, which were numerous, (and especially in the class where individuals, hard pressed on account of their own wants, are often rendered callous to the distress of others,) could have prevented France, during this horrible period, from becoming an universal charnel-house, and her history an unvaried kalendar of murder.

* Strangers are forcibly affected by the trifling incidents which sometimes recall the memory of those fearful times. A venerable French ecclesiastic being on a visit at a gentleman's house in North Britain, it was remarked by the family, that a favourite cat, rather wild and capricious in his habits, paid particular attention to their guest. It was explained, by the priest giving an account of his lurking in the waste garret, or lumber-room, of an artisan's house, for several weeks. In this condition he had no better amusement than to study the manners and habits of the cats which frequented his place of retreat, and acquire the mode of conciliating their favour. The difficulty of supplying him with food, without attracting suspicion, was extreme, and it could only be placed near his place of concealment in small quantities, and at uncertain times. Men, women, and children, knew of his being in that place; there were rewards to be gained by discovery, life to be lost by persevering in concealing him; yet he was faithfully preserved, to try upon a Scottish cat, after the restoration of the Monarchy, the arts which he had learned in his miserable place of shelter during the reign of Terror. The history of the time abounds with similar instances.

CHAPTER XVII.

Marat, Danton, Robespierre.—Marat poniarded—Danton and Robespierre become Rivals.—Commune of Paris—their gross Irreligion.—Gobet.—Goddess of Reason.—Marriage reduced to a Civil Contract.—Views of Danton—and of Robespierre.—Principal Leaders of the Commune arrested—and Nineteen of them executed.—Danton arrested by the influence of Robespierre—and, along with Camille Desmoulins, Westermann, and La Croix, taken before the Revolutionary Tribunal, condemned, and executed.—Decree issued, on the motion of Robespierre, acknowledging a Supreme Being.—Cecilia Regnaut.—Gradual Change in the Public Mind.—Robespierre becomes unpopular—Makes every effort to retrieve his power.—Stormy Debate in the Convention.—Collot D'Herbois, Tallien, &c. expelled from the Jacobin Club at the instigation of Robespierre.—Robespierre denounced in the Convention on the 9th Thermidor (27th July), and, after furious struggles, arrested, along with his brother, Couthon, and Saint Just.—Henriot, Commandant of the National Guard, arrested.—Terrorists take Refuge in the Hotel de Ville—Attempt their own lives.—Robespierre wounds himself—but lives, along with most of the others, long enough to be carried to the Guillotine, and executed.—His character—Struggles that followed his Fate.—Final Destruction of the Jacobinical System—and return of Tranquillity.—Singular colour given to Society in Paris.—Ball of the Victims.

THE reader need not be reminded, that the three distinguished champions who assumed the front in the Jacobin ranks, were Marat, Danton, and Robespierre. The first was poniarded by Charlotte Corday, an enthusiastic young person, who had nourished, in a feeling betwixt lunacy and heroism, the ambition of ridding the world of a tyrant. Danton and Robespierre, reduced to a Duumvirate, might have divided the power betwixt them. But Danton, far the more able and powerful-minded man, could not resist temptations to plunder and to revel; and Robespierre, who took care to preserve proof of his rival's peculations, a crime of a peculiarly unpopular character, and from which he seemed to keep his own hands pure, possessed thereby the power of ruining him whenever he should find it convenient. Danton married a beautiful woman, became a candidate for domestic happiness, withdrew himself for some time from state affairs, and quitted the stern and menacing attitude which he had presented to the public during the earlier stages of the Revolution. Still his ascendancy, especially in the Club of Cordeliers, was formidable enough to command Robespierre's constant attention, and keep awake his envy, which was like the worm that dieth not, though it did not draw down any indication of his immediate and active vengeance. A power, kindred also in crime, but more within his reach for the moment, was first to be demolished, ere Robespierre was to measure strength with his great rival.

This third party consisted of those who had possessed themselves of official situations in the Commune of Paris, whose civic authority, and the implement which they commanded in the Revolutionary army, commanded by Roussin, gave them the power of marching, at a moment's warning, upon the Convention, or even against the Jacobin Club. It is true, these men, of whom Hebert, Chaumette, and others, were leaders, had never shown the least diffidence of Robespierre, but, on the contrary, had used all means to propitiate his favour. But the man whom a tyrant fears, becomes, with little farther provocation, the object of his mortal enmity. Robespierre watched, therefore, with vigilance, the occasion of overreaching and destroying this party, whose power he dreaded; and, singular to tell, he sought the means of accomplishing their ruin in the very extravagance of their revolutionary zeal, which shortly before he might

have envied, as pushed farther than his own. But Robespierre did not want sense; and he saw with pleasure Hebert, Chaumette, and their followers, run into such inordinate extravagancies, as he thought might render his own interference desirable, even to those who most disliked his principles, most abhorred the paths by which he had climbed to power, and most feared the use which he made of it.

It was through the subject of religion that this means of ruining his opponents, as he hoped, arose. A subject, which one would have thought so indifferent to either, came to be on both sides the occasion of quarrel between the Commune of Paris and the Jacobin leader. But there is a fanaticism of atheism, as well as of superstitious belief; and a philosopher can harbour and express as much malice against those who persevere in believing what he is pleased to denounce as unworthy of credence, as an ignorant and bigoted priest can bear against a man who cannot yield faith to dogmata which he thinks insufficiently proved. Accordingly, the throne being totally annihilated, it appeared to the philosophers of the school of Hebert, (who was author of the most gross and beastly periodical paper of the time, called the *Pere du Chene*,) that in totally destroying such vestiges of religion and public worship as were still retained by the people of France, there was room for a splendid triumph of liberal opinions. It was not enough, they said, for a regenerate nation to have dethroned earthly kings, unless she stretched out the arm of defiance towards those powers which superstition had represented as reigning over boundless space.

An unhappy man, named Gobet, Constitutional Bishop of Paris, was brought forward to play the principal part in the most impudent and scandalous farce ever acted in the face of a national representation.

It is said that the leaders of the scene had some difficulty in inducing the bishop to comply with the task assigned him, which, after all, he executed, not without present tears and subsequent remorse. But he did play the part prescribed. He was brought forward in full procession, to declare to the Convention, that the religion which he had taught so many years, was, in every respect, a piece of priestcraft, which had no foundation either in history or sacred truth. He disowned, in solemn and explicit terms, the existence of the Deity to whose worship he had been consecrated, and devoted himself in future to the homage of Liberty, Equality, Virtue, and Morality. He then laid on the table his Episcopal decorations, and received a fraternal embrace from the President of the Convention. Several apostate priests followed the example of this prelate.

The gold and silver plate of the churches was seized upon and desecrated; processions entered the Convention, travestied in priestly garments, and singing the most profane hymns; while many of the chalices and sacred vessels were applied by Chaumette and Hebert to the celebration of their own impious orgies. The world, for the first time, heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce unanimously the belief and worship of a Deity. For a short time the same mad profanity continued to be acted upon.

One of the ceremonies of this insane time stands unrivalled for absurdity, combined with impiety. The doors of the Convention were thrown open to a band of musicians; preceded by whom, the members of the Municipal Body entered in solemn procession, singing a hymn in praise of liberty, and escorting, as the object of their future worship, a veiled female, whom they termed the Goddess of Reason. Being brought within the bar, she was unveiled with great form, and placed on the right hand of the President; when she was generally recognized as a dancing-girl of the Opera, with whose charms most of the persons present were acquainted from her appearance on the stage, while the

experience of individuals was farther extended. To this person, as the fittest representative of that Reason whom they worshipped, the National Convention of France rendered public homage.

This impious and ridiculous mummary had a certain fashion ; and the installation of the Goddess of Reason was renewed and imitated throughout the nation, in such places where the inhabitants desired to show themselves equal to all the heights of the Revolution. The churches were, in most districts of France, closed against priests and worshippers—the bells were broken and cast into cannon—the whole ecclesiastical establishment destroyed—and the Republican inscription over the cemeteries, declaring death to be perpetual sleep, announced to those who lived under that dominion, that they were to hope no redress even in the next world.

Intimately connected with these laws affecting religion, was that which reduced the union of marriage, the most sacred engagement which human beings can form, and the permanence of which leads most strongly to the consolidation of society, to the state of a mere civil contract of a transitory character, which any two persons might engage in, and cast loose at pleasure, when their taste was changed, or their appetite gratified. If fiends had set themselves to work to discover a mode of most effectually destroying whatever is venerable, graceful, or permanent in domestic life, and of obtaining at the same time an assurance that the mischief which it was their object to create should be perpetuated from one generation to another, they could not have invented a more effectual plan than the degradation of marriage into a state of mere occasional cohabitation, or licensed concubinage. Sophie Arnoult, an actress famous for the witty things she said, described the Republican marriage as the Sacrament of adultery.

These anti-religious and anti-social regulations did not answer the purpose of the frantic and inconsiderate zealots by whom they had been urged forward. Hebert and Chaumette had outrun the spirit of the time, evil as that was, and had contrived to get beyond the sympathy even of those, who, at heart as vicious and criminal as they, had still the sagacity to fear, or the taste to be disgusted with, this overstrained tone of outrageous impiety. Perhaps they might have other motives for condemning so gross a display of irreligion. The most guilty of men are not desirous, generally speaking, totally to disbelieve and abandon all doctrines of religious faith. They cannot, if they would, prevent themselves from apprehending a future state of retribution ; and little effect as such feeble glimmering of belief may have on their lives, they will not in general willingly throw away the slight chance, that it may be possible on some occasion to reconcile themselves to the Church or to the Deity. This hope, even to those on whom it has no salutary influence, resembles the confidence given to a sailor during a gale of wind, by his knowing that there is a port under his lee. His purpose may be never to run for the haven, or he may judge there is great improbability that by doing so he should reach it in safety ; yet still, such being the case, he would esteem himself but little indebted to any one who should blot the harbour of refuge out of the chart. To all those, who, in various degrees, received and believed the great truths of religion, on which those of morality are dependant, the professors of those wild absurdities became objects of contempt, dislike, hatred, and punishment.

Danton regarded the proceedings of Hebert and his philosophers of the Commune with scorn and disgust. However wicked he had shown himself, he was too wise and too proud to approve of such impolitic and senseless folly. Besides, this perpetual undermining whatever remained of social institutions, prevented any stop being put to the revolutionary movements, which Danton, having placed his party at the head of affairs, and himself nearly as high as he could promise to climb, was now desirous should be done.

Robespierre looked on these extravagant proceedings with a different and

more watchful eye. He saw what Hebert and his associates had lost in popularity, by affecting the doctrines of atheism and utter profaneness; and he imagined a plan, first for destroying these blasphemers, by the general consent of the nation, as noxious animals, and then of enlarging, and, as it were, sanctifying his own power, by once more connecting a spirit of devotion of some modified kind or other with the revolutionary form of government, of which he desired to continue the head.

It has even been supposed, that Robespierre's extravagant success in rising so much above all human expectation, had induced him to entertain some thoughts of acting the part of a new Mahomet, in bringing back religious opinion into France, under his own direct auspices. He is said to have countenanced in secret the extravagancies of a female called Catharine Theot, or Theos, an enthusiastic devotee, whose doctrines leaned to Quietism. She was a kind of Joanna Southcote, and the Aaron of her sect was Dom Gerle, formerly a Carthusian monk, and remarkable for the motion he made in the first National Assembly, that the Catholic religion should be recognised as that of France.* Since that time he had become entirely deranged. A few visionaries of both sexes attended secret and nightly meetings, in which Theot and Dom Gerle presided. Robespierre was recognised by them as one of the elect, and is said to have favoured their superstitious doctrines. But whether the Dictator saw in them anything more than tools, which might be applied to his own purpose, there seems no positive authority to decide. At any rate, whatever religious opinions he might have imbibed himself, or have become desirous of infusing into the state, they were not such as were qualified to modify either his ambition, his jealousy, or his love of blood.

The power of Hebert, Chaumette, and of the Community of Paris, was now ripe for destruction. Roussin, with the other armed satellites of the revolutionary army, bullied indeed, and spoke about taking the part of the magistracy of Paris against the Convention; but though they had the master and active ruffians still at their service, they could no longer command the long sable columns of pikes, which used to follow and back them, and without whose aid they feared they might not be found equal in number to face the National Guard. So early as 27th December 1793, we find Chaumette expressing himself to the Commune as one who had fallen on evil times and evil days. He brought forward evidence to show, that it was not he who had conducted the installation of the Goddess of Reason in his native city of Nevers; and he complains heavily of his lot, that the halls were crowded with women demanding the liberty of their husbands, and complaining of the conduct of the Revolutionary Societies. It was plain that a change was taking place in the political atmosphere, when Chaumette was obliged to vindicate himself from the impiety which used to be his boast, and was subjected besides to female reproach for his Republican zeal, in imprisoning and destroying a few thousand suspected persons.

The spirit of reaction increased, and was strengthened by Robespierre's influence now thrown into the scale against the Commune. The principal leaders in the Commune, many of whom seem to have been foreigners, and among the rest the celebrated Anacharsis Clootz, were arrested.†

The case of these men was singular, and would have been worthy of pity had it applied to any but such worthless wretches. They were accused of almost every species of crime, which seemed such in the eyes of a Sans-Culotte. Much there was which could be only understood metaphysically, much there was of literal falsehood, but little or nothing like a distinct or well-grounded accusation of a specific criminal fact. The charge bore, that they were associates of Pitt and Cobourg, and had combined against the sovereignty of the people—loaded them with the intention of starving thereby Paris—with that of

ridiculing the Convention, by a set of puppets dressed up to imitate that scarce less passive Assembly—and much more to the same purpose, consisting of allegations that were totally unimportant, or totally unproved. But nothing was said of their rivalry to Robespierre, which was the true cause of their trial, and as little of their revolutionary murders, being the ground on which they really deserved their fate. Something was talked of pillage, at which Roussin, the commandant of the Revolutionary Army, lost all patience. “Do they talk to me of pilfering?” he says—“Dare they accuse such a man as I am of a theft of bed and body linen? Do they bring against me a charge of petty larceny—against me, who have had all their throats at my disposal?”

The accused persons were convicted and executed, to the number of nineteen. From that time the city of Paris lost the means of being so pre-eminent in the affairs of France, as her Commune had formerly rendered her. The power of the magistracy was much broken by the reduction of the Revolutionary Army, which the Convention dissolved as levied upon false principles, and as being rather a metropolitan than a national force, and one which was easily applied to serve the purposes of a party.

The Hebertists being removed, Robespierre had yet to combat and defeat a more formidable adversary. The late conspirators had held associations with the Club of Cordeliers, with which Danton was supposed to have particular relations, but they had not experienced his support, which in policy he ought to have extended to them. He had begun to separate his party and his views too distinctly from his old friends and old proceedings. He imagined, falsely as it proved, that his bark could sail as triumphantly upon waves composed only of water, as on those of blood. He and others seem to have been seized with a loathing against these continued acts of cruelty, as if they had been gorged and nauseated by the constant repetition. Danton spoke of mercy and pardon; and his partisan, Camille Desmoulins, in a very ingenious parody upon Tacitus, drew a comparison between the tyrants and informers of the French Jacobin government, and those of the Roman Imperial Court. The parallels were most ably drawn, and Robespierre and his agents might read their own characters in those of the most odious wretches of that odious time. From these aggressions Danton seemed to meditate the part which Tallien afterwards adopted, of destroying Robespierre and his power, and substituting a mode of government which should show some regard at least to life and to property. But he was too late in making his movement; Robespierre was beforehand with him; and, on the morning of the 31st of March, the Parisians and the members of the Convention hardly dared whisper to each other, that Danton, whose name had been as formidable as the sound of the tocsin, had been arrested like any poor ex-noble, and was in the hands of the fatal lictors.

There was no end of exclamation and wonder; for Danton was the great apostle, the very Mahomet of Jacobinism. His gigantic stature, his huge and ferocious physiognomy, his voice which struck terror in its notes of distant thunder, and the energies of talent and vehemence mingled, which supplied that voice with language worthy of its deep tones, were such as became the prophet of that horrible and fearful sect. Marat was a madman, raised into consequence only by circumstances,—Robespierre a cold, creeping, calculating hypocrite, whose malignity resembled that of a paltry and second-rate fiend,—but Danton was a character for Shakspeare or Schiller to have drawn in all its broad lights and shades; or Bruce could have sketched from him a yet grander Ras Michael than he of Tigré. His passions were a hurricane, which, furious, regardless, and desolating in its course, had yet its intervals of sunshine and repose. Neither good by nature, nor just by principle or political calculation, men were often surprised at finding he still possessed some feelings of generosity, and some tendency even towards magnanimity. Early habits of profligate indulgence, the most complete stifler of human virtue, and his implication at the

beginning of his career with the wretched faction of Orleans, made him, if not a worse, certainly a meaner villain than nature had designed him; for his pride must have saved him from much, which he yielded to from the temptations of gross indulgence, and from the sense of narrow circumstances. Still when Danton fell under Robespierre, it seemed as if the mousing-owl had hawked at and struck an eagle, or at least a high-soaring vulture. His avowed associates lamented him of course; nay, Legendre and others, by undertaking his defence in the Convention, and arrogating for him the merit of those violent measures which had paved the way to the triumph of Jacobinism, showed more consistency in their friendship than these ferocious demagogues manifested on any other occasion.

Danton, before his fall, seemed to have lost much of his sagacity as well as energy. He had full warning of his danger from La Croix, Westermann, and others, yet took no steps either for escape or defence, though either seemed in his power. Still his courage was in no degree abated, or his haughty spirit tamed; although he seemed to submit passively to his fate with the disheartening conviction, which often unmans great criminals, that his hour was come.

Danton's process was, of course, a short one. He and his comrades, Camille Desmoulins, Westermann, and La Croix, were dragged before the Revolutionary Tribunal, a singular accomplishment of the prophecy of the Girondist, Boyer Fonfrede. This man had exclaimed to Danton, under whose auspices that engine of arbitrary power was established, "You insist, then, upon erecting this arbitrary judgment-seat? Be it so; and, like the tormenting engine devised by Phalaris, may it not fail to consume its inventors!" As judges, witnesses, accusers, and guards, Danton was now surrounded by those who had been too humble to aspire to be companions of his atrocities, and held themselves sufficiently honoured in becoming his agents. They looked on his unstooping pride and unshaken courage, as timid spectators upon a lion in a cage, while they still doubt the security of the bars, and have little confidence in their own personal safety. He answered, to the formal interrogatories concerning his name and dwelling, "My dwelling will be soon with annihilation—my name will live in the Pantheon of History." Camille Desmoulins, Herault les Sechelles, Fabre d'Eglantine, men of considerable literary talent, and amongst the few Jacobins who had any real pretension to such accomplishments, shared his fate. Westermann was also numbered with them, the same officer who directed the attack on the palace of the Tuilleries on 10th August, and who afterwards was distinguished by so many victories and defeats in La Vendée, that he was called, from his activity, the scourge of that district.

Their accusation was, as in all such cases at the period, an olla podrida, if we can be allowed the expression, in which every criminal ingredient was mixed up; but so incoherently mingled and assembled together, so inconsistent with each other, and so obscurely detailed in the charge and in the proof, that it was plain that malignant falsehood had made the gruel thick and slab. Had Danton been condemned for his real crimes, the doom ought, in justice, to have involved judges, jurors, witnesses, and most of the spectators in the court.

Robespierre became much alarmed for the issue of the trial. The Convention showed reviving signs of spirit; and when a revolutionary deputation demanded, at the bar, "that death should be the order of the day," and reminded them, that, "had they granted the moderate demand of three hundred thousand heads, when requested by the philanthropic, and now canonized Marat, they would have saved the republic the wars of La Vendée," they were received with discouraging murmurs. Tallien, the president, informed them, "that not death, but justice, was the order of the day;" and the petitioners, notwithstanding the patriotic turn of their modest request, were driven from the bar with execrations.

This looked ill; but the power of Robespierre was still predominant with the Revolutionary Tribunal, and after a gallant, and unusually long defence, (of which no notice was permitted to appear in the *Moniteur*,) Danton and his associates were condemned, and carried to instant execution. They maintained their firmness, or rather hardenedness of character, to the last; and when Danton observed Fabre d'Eglantine beginning to look gloomy, he cheered him with a play on words: "Courage, my friend," he said, in his deep, sullen tone of voice, "we are all about to take up your trade—*Nous allons faire des vers*. The sufferers on this occasion, were men whose accomplishments and talents attracted a higher degree of sympathy, than that which had been given to the equally eloquent but less successful Girondists. Even honest men looked on the fate of Danton with some regret, as when a furious bull is slain with a slight blow by a crafty Tauridor; and many men of good feelings had hoped, that the cause of order and security might at least have been benefited in some degree, by his obtaining the victory in a struggle with Robespierre. Those, on the other hand, who followed the fortunes of the latter, conceived his power had been rendered permanent, by the overthrow of his last and most formidable rival, and exalted in proportion. Both were deceived in their calculations. The predominance of such a man as Danton, might possibly have protracted the reign of Jacobinism, even by rendering it somewhat more endurable; but the permanent, at least the ultimate, success of Robespierre, was becoming more impossible, from the repeated decimations to which his jealousy subjected his party. He was like the wild chief, Lope d'Aguirre, whose story is so well told by Southey, who, descending the great river Orellana with a party of buccaneers, cut off one part of his followers after another, in doubt of their fidelity, until the remainder saw no chance for escaping a similar fate, unless by being beforehand with their leader in murder.

Alluding to Robespierre's having been the instrument of his destruction, Danton had himself exclaimed, "The cowardly poltroon! I am the only person who could have commanded influence enough to save him." And the event showed that he spoke with the spirit of prophecy which the approach of fate has been sometimes thought to confer.

In fact, Robespierre was much isolated by the destruction of the party of Hebert, and still more by that of Danton and his followers. He had, so to speak, scarped away the ground which he occupied, until he had scarce left himself standing-room; and, detested by honest men, he had alienated, by his successive cruelties, even the knaves who would otherwise have adhered to him for their own safety. All now looked on him with fear, and none dared hope at the hands of the Dictator a better boon than that which is promised to *Ovms*, that he should be the last devoured.

It was at this period that Robespierre conceived the idea of reversing the profanities of Chaumette, Hebert, and the atheists, by professing a public belief in the existence of a Deity. This, he conceived, would at once be a sacrifice to public opinion, and, as he hoped to manage it, a new and potent spring, to be moved by his own finger. In a word, he seems to have designed to unite, with his power in the state, the character of High Pontiff of the new faith.

As the organ of the Committee of Public Safety, Robespierre, by a speech of great length, and extremely dull, undertook the conversion of the French nation from infidelity. Upon all such occasions he had recourse to that gross flattery, which was his great, rarely-failing, and almost sole receipt for popularity. He began by assuring them, that, in her lights, and the progress of her improvement, France had preceded the rest of Europe by a mark of at least two thousand years; and that, existing among the ordinary nations of the world, she appeared to belong to another race of beings. Still he thought some belief in a Deity would do her no harm. Then he was again hurried away by

his eloquence, of which we cannot help giving a literal specimen, to show at how little expense of sense, taste, or talent, a man may be held an excellent orator, and become dictator of a great nation:—

“ Yes, the delicious land which we inhabit, and which Nature caresses with so much predilection, is made to be the domain of liberty and of happiness; and that people, at once so open to feeling and to generous pride, are born for glory and for virtue. O my native country! if fortune had caused my birth in some region remote from thy shores, I would not the less have addressed constant prayers to Heaven in thy behalf, and would have wept over the recital of thy combats and thy virtues. My soul would have followed with restless ardour every change in this eventful Revolution—I would have envied the lot of thy natives—of thy representatives. But I am myself a native of France—I am myself a representative. Intoxicating rapture!—O sublime people, receive the sacrifice of my entire being! Happy is he who is born in the midst of thee! More happy he who can lay down his life for thy welfare!”*

Such was the language which this great demagogue held to the sublime people whose lives he disposed of at the rate of fifty per day, regular task-work; and who were so well protected in person and property, that no man dared call his hat his own, or answer for ten minutes’ space for the security of the head that wore it. Much there was, also, about the rashness of the worshippers of Reason, whose steps he accuses of being too premature in her cause—much about England and Mr Pitt, who, he says, fasted on account of the destruction of the Catholic religion in France, as they were mourning for Capet and his wife. But the summary of this extraordinary oration was a string of decrees, commencing with a declaration that the Republic of France acknowledged the existence of a Supreme Being, in the precise form in which the grand nation might have recognised the government of a co-ordinate state. The other decrees established the nature of the worship to be rendered to the Great Being whom these frail atoms had restored to his place in their thoughts; and this was to be expressed by dedicating a day in each decade to some peculiar and established Virtue, with hymns and processions in due honour of it, approaching as near to Paganism as could well be accomplished. The last decree appointed a fête to be given in honour of the Supreme Being himself, as the nation might have celebrated by public rejoicings a pacification with some neighbouring power.

The speech was received with servile applause by the Convention. Couthon, with affected enthusiasm, demanded that not only the speech should be published in the usual form, by supplying each member with six copies, but that the plan should be translated into all languages, and dispersed through the universe.

The conducting of this heathen mummary, which was substituted for every external sign of rational devotion, was intrusted to the genius of the painter, David; and had it not been that the daring blasphemy of the purpose threw a chill upon the sense of ridicule, it was scarcely matched as a masquerade even by the memorable procession conducted by the notorious Orator of the Human Race.† There was a general muster of all Paris, divided into bands of young women and matrons, and old men and youths, with oaken boughs and drawn swords, and all other emblems appertaining to their different ages. They were

* When we read such miserable stuff, and consider the crimes which such oratory occasioned, it reminds us of the opinion of a Mahomedan doctor, who assured Bruce that the Degial, or Antichrist, was to appear in the form of an ass, and that multitudes were to follow him to hell, attracted by the music of his braying.

† Poor Anacharsis Clootz. He had been expelled from the Jacobin Club as a Prussian, an exile, and, what perhaps was not previously suspected, a person of fortune enough to be judged an aristocrat. His real offence was being a Hebertist, and he suffered accordingly with the leaders of that party.—This note was rather unnecessary; but Anacharsis Clootz was, in point of absurdity, one of the most inimitable personages in the Revolution.

preceded by the representatives of the people, having their hands full of ears of corn, and spices, and fruits; while Robespierre, their president, clad in a sort of purple garment, moved apart and alone, and played the part of Sovereign Pontiff.

After marching up and down through the streets, to the sound of doggrel hymns, the procession drew up in the gardens of the Tuilleries, before some fireworks which had been prepared, and Robespierre made a speech, entirely addressed to the bystanders, without a word either of prayer or invocation. His acknowledgment of a Divinity was, it seems, limited to a mere admission in point of fact, and involved no worship of the great Being, whose existence he at length condescended to own. He had no sooner made his offering, than fire was set to some figures dressed up to resemble Atheism, Ambition, Egotism, and other evil principles. The young men then brandished their weapons, the old patted them on the head, the girls flung about their flowers, and the matrons flourished aloft their children, all as it had been set down in David's programme. And this scene of masking was to pass for the repentance of a great people turning themselves again to the Deity, whose worship they had forsaken, and whose being they had denied!

I will appeal—not to a sincere Christian—but to any philosopher forming such idea of the nature of the Deity, as even mere unassisted reason can attain to, whether there does not appear more impiety in Robespierre's mode of acknowledging the Divinity, than in Hebert's horrible avowal of direct Atheism?

The procession did not, in common phrase, *take* with the people; it produced no striking effect—awakened no deep feeling. By Catholics it was regarded with horror, by wise men of every or no principle as ridiculous; and there were politicians, who, under the disguise of this religious ceremony, pretended to detect further and deeper schemes of the dictator Robespierre. Even in the course of the procession, threats and murmurs had reached his ears, which the impatient resentment of the friends of Danton was unable to suppress; and he saw plainly that he must again betake himself to the task of murder, and dispose of Tallien, Collot d'Herbois, and others, as he had done successively of Hebert and Danton himself, or else his former victories would but lead to his final ruin.

Meanwhile the despot, whose looks made even the democrats of The Mountain tremble, when directed upon them, shrunk himself before the apprehended presence of a young female. Cecile Regnaud, a girl, and, as it would seem, unarmed, came to his house and demanded to see Robespierre. Her manner exciting some suspicion, she was seized upon by the body-guard of Jacobins, who day and night watched the den of the tyrant, amidst riot and blasphemy, while he endeavoured to sleep under the security of their neighbourhood. When the young woman was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, she would return no answer to the questions respecting her purpose, excepting that she wished to see "what a tyrant was like." She was condemned to the guillotine of course; and about sixty persons were executed as associates of a conspiracy, which was never proved, by deed or word, to have existed at all. The victims were drawn at hazard out of the prisons, where most of them had been confined for months previous to the arrest of Cecile Regnaud, on whose account they were represented as suffering.* Many have thought the crime entirely imaginary, and only invented by Robespierre, to represent his person as endangered by the plots of the aristocracy, and attach to himself a part at least of the consequence, which Marat had acquired by the act of Charlotte Corday.

* This unheard-of iniquity is stated in the report of the committee appointed to examine Robespierre's papers, of which Courtois was the reporter. It is rather a curious circumstance that, about the time of Cecile Regnaud's adventure, there appeared, at a masked ball at London, a character dressed like the spectre of Charlotte Corday, come, as she said, to seek Robespierre, and inflict on him the doom of Marat.

A few weeks brought on a sterner encounter than that of the supposed female assassin. The Terrorists were divided among themselves. The chosen and ancient bands of the 10th August, 2d September, 31st May, and other remarkable periods of the Revolution, continued attached to the Jacobins, and the majority of the Jacobin Club adhered to Robespierre; it was there his strength consisted. On the other hand, Tallien, Barras, Legendre, Fouché, and other of the Mountain party, remembered Danton, and feared for a similar fate. The Convention at large were sure to embrace any course which promised to free them from their present thralldom.

The people themselves were beginning to be less passive. They no longer saw the train of victims pass daily to the guillotine, in the Place de la Revolution, with stupid wonder, or overwhelming fear, but, on the contrary, with the sullenness of manifest resentment, that waited but an opportunity to display itself. The citizens in the Rue St Honoré shut up their shops at the hours when the fatal tumbrils passed to the scene of death, and that whole quarter of the city was covered with gloom.

These ominous feelings were observed, and the fatal engine was removed to a more obscure situation at the Barrier de la Trone, near the Fauxbourg Saint Antoine, to the inhabitants of which it was thought a daily spectacle of this nature must be an interesting relief from labour. But even the people of that turbulent suburb had lost some of their Republican zeal—the men's feelings were altered. They saw, indeed, blood stream in such quantities, that it was necessary to make an artificial conduit to carry it off; but they did not feel that they, or those belonging to them, received any advantages from the number of victims, daily immolated, as they were assured, in their behalf. The constant effusion of blood, without plunder or license to give it zest, disgusted them, as it would have disgusted all but literal cannibals, to whose sustenance, indeed, the Revolutionary Tribunal would have contributed plentifully.

Robespierre saw all this increasing unpopularity with much anxiety. He plainly perceived that, strong as its impulse was, the stimulus of terror began to lose its effect on the popular mind; and he resolved to give it novelty, not by changing the character of his system, but by varying the mode of its application. Hitherto, men had only been executed for political crimes, although the circle had been so vaguely drawn, and capable of such extension when desired, that the law regarding suspected persons was alone capable of desolating a whole country. But if the penalty of death were to be inflicted for religious and moral delinquencies, as well as for crimes directed against the state, it would at once throw the lives of thousands at his disposal, upon whom he could have no ready hold on political motives, and might support, at the same time, his newly assumed character as a reformer of manners. He would also thus escape the disagreeable and embarrassing necessity, of drawing lines of distinction betwixt his own conduct and that of the old friends whom he found it convenient to sacrifice. He could not say he was less a murderer than the rest of his associates, but he might safely plead more external decency of morals. His own manners had always been reserved and austere; and what a triumph would it have been, had the laws permitted him the benefit of slaying Danton, not under that political character which could hardly be distinguished from his own, but on account of the gross peculation and debauchery, which none could impute to the austere and incorruptible Robespierre.

His subordinate agents began already to point to a reformation of manners. Payan, who succeeded Hebert in the important station of Procureur to the Commune of the metropolis, had already adopted a very different line from his predecessor, whose style derived energy by printing at full length the foulest oaths, and most beastly expressions, used by the refuse of the people. Payan, on the contrary, in direct opposition to Pere Duchesne, is found gravely advising with the Commune of Paris, on a plan of preventing the exposing licen-

tious prints and works to sale, to the evident danger of corrupting the rising generation.

There exists also a curious address from the Convention, which tends to evince a similar purpose in the framer, Robespierre. The guilt of profane swearing, and of introducing the sacred name into ordinary speech, as an unmeaning and blasphemous expletive, is severely censured. The using indecent and vicious expressions in common discourse is also touched upon; but as this unbounded energy of speech had been so very lately one of the most accredited marks of a true Sans-Culotte, the legislators were compelled to qualify their censure by admitting, that, at the commencement of the Revolution, the vulgar mode of speaking had been generally adopted by patriots, in order to destroy the jargon employed by the privileged classes, and to *popularize*, as it was expressed, the general language of society. But these ends being effected, the speech of Republicans ought, it is said, to be simple, manly, and concise, but at the same time free from coarseness and violence.

From these indications, and the tenor of a decree to be hereafter quoted, it seems plain that Robespierre was about to affect a new character, not, perhaps, without the hope of finding a Puritanic party in France, as favourable to his ambitious views as that of the Independents was to Cromwell. He might then have added the word *virtue* to liberty and equality, which formed the national programme, and, doubtless, would have made it the pretext of committing additional crimes. The decree which we allude to was brought forward by the philanthropic Couthon, who, with his kindness of manner, rendered more impressive by a silver-toned voice, and an affectation of extreme gentleness, tendered a law, extending the powers of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and the penalty of death, not only to all sorts of persons who should in any manner of way neglect their duty to the Republic, or assist her enemies, but to the following additional classes: All who should have deceived the people, or their representatives—all who should have sought to inspire discouragement into good citizens, or to favour the undertakings of tyrants—all who should spread false news—all who should seek to lead astray the public opinion, and to prevent the instruction of the people, or to debauch manners, and corrupt the public conscience; or who should diminish the purity of revolutionary principles by counter-revolutionary works, &c. &c. &c.

It is evident, that compared with a law couched in terms so vague and general, so obscure and indefinite, the description of crimes concerning suspected persons was broad sunshine; that there was no Frenchman living who might not be brought within the danger of the decree, under one or other of those sweeping clauses; that a loose or careless expression, or the repetition of an inaccurate article of news, might be founded on as corrupting the public conscience, or misleading the public opinion; in short, that the slightest indulgence in the most ordinary functions of speech might be brought under this comprehensive edict, and so cost the speaker his life.

The decree sounded like a death-knell in the ears of the Convention. All were made sensible that another decimation of the Legislative Body approached; and beheld with terror, that no provision was made in the proposed law for respecting the personal inviolability of the deputies, but that the obnoxious members of the Convention, without costing Robespierre even the formality of asking a decree from their complaisant brethren, might be transferred, like any ordinary individuals, to the butchery of the Revolutionary Tribunal, not only by the medium of either of the committees, but at the instance of the public prosecutor, or even of any of their own brethren of the Representative Body, who were acting under a commission. Ruamps, one of the deputies, exclaimed, in accents of despair, that if this decree were resolved upon, the friends of liberty had no other course left than to blow their own brains out.

The law passed for the night, in spite of all opposition; but the terrified

deputies returned to the attack next day. The measure was again brought into debate, and the question of privileges was evasively provided for. At a third sitting the theme was renewed; and, after much violence, the fatal decree was carried, without any of the clogs which had offended Robespierre, and he attained possession of the fatal weapon, such as he had originally forged it.

From this moment there was mortal though secret war betwixt Robespierre and the most distinguished members of the Assembly, particularly those who had sate with him on the celebrated Mountain, and shared all the atrocities of Jacobinism. Collot d'Herbois, the demolisher of Lyons, and regenerator of Ville Affranchie, threw his weight into the scale against his master; and several other members of both committees, which were Robespierre's own organs, began secretly to think on means of screening themselves from a power, which, like the huge Anaconda, enveloped in its coils, and then crushed and swallowed, whatever came in contact with it. The private progress of the schism cannot be traced; but it is said that the Dictator found himself in a minority in the Committee of Public Safety, when he demanded the head of Fouché, whom he had accused as a Dantonist in the Convention and the Jacobin Club. It is certain he had not attended the meeting of the Committee for two or three weeks before his fall, leaving his interest there to be managed by Couthon and Saint Just.

Feeling himself thus placed in the lists against his ancient friends the Terrorists, the astucious tyrant endeavoured to acquire allies among the remains of the Girondists, who had been spared in contempt more than clemency, and permitted to hide themselves among the neutral party who occupied the Plain, and who gave generally their votes on the prudential system of adhering to the stronger side.

Finding little countenance from this timid and long-neglected part of the Legislative Body, Robespierre returned to his more steady supporters in the Jacobin Club. Here he retained his supremacy, and was heard with enthusiastic applause; while he intimated to them the defection of certain members of the legislature from the true revolutionary course; complained of the inactivity and lukewarmness of the Committees of Public Safety and Public Security, and described himself as a persecuted patriot, almost the solitary supporter of the cause of his country, and exposed for that reason to the blows of a thousand assassins.

"All patriots," exclaimed Couthon, "are brothers and friends! For my part, I invoke on myself the poniards destined against Robespierre."

"So do we all!" exclaimed the meeting, unanimously.

Thus encouraged, Robespierre urged a purification of the Society, directing his accusations against Fouché and other members of The Mountain; and he received the encouragement he desired.

He next ascertained his strength among the Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and his willing agents among the reformed Commune of Paris, which, after the fall of Hebert and Chaumette, he had taken care to occupy with his most devoted friends. But still he knew that, in the storm which was about to arise, these out-of-door demagogues were but a sort of tritons of the minnows, compared to Tallien, Fouché, Barras, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud Varennes, and other deputies of distinguished powers, accustomed to make their voices heard and obeyed amid all the roar of revolutionary tempest. He measured and re-measured his force with theirs; and for more than six weeks avoided the combat, yet without making any overtures for reconciliation, in which, indeed, neither party would probably have trusted the other.

Meantime the Dictator's enemies had also their own ground on which they could engage advantageously in these skirmishes, which were to serve as preludes to the main and fatal conflict. Vadier, on the part of the Committee of Public Safety, laid before the Convention, in a tone of bitter satirical ridicule,

the history of the mystical meetings and formation of a religious sect under Catherine Theot, whose pretensions have been already hinted at. No mention was indeed made of Robespierre, or of the countenance he was supposed to have given to these fanatical intriguers. But the fact of his having done so was well known; and the shafts of Vadier were aimed with such malignant dexterity, that while they seemed only directed against the mystics of whom he spoke, they galled to the quick the High Pontiff, who had so lately conducted the new and singular system of worship which his influence had been employed to ingraft upon the genuine atheism natural to Jacobinism.

Robespierre felt he could not remain long in this situation—that there were no means of securing himself where he stood—that he must climb higher, or fall—and that every moment in which he supported insults and endured menaces without making his vengeance felt, brought with it a diminution of his power. He seems to have hesitated between combat and flight. Among his papers, according to the report of Courtois who examined them, was found an obscure intimation, that he had acquired a competent property, and entertained thoughts of retiring at the close of his horrible career, after the example of the celebrated Sylla. It was a letter from some unknown confidant, unsigned and undated, containing the following singular passage:—"You must employ all your dexterity to escape from the scene on which you are now once more to appear, in order to leave it for ever. Your having attained the President's chair will be but one step to the guillotine, through a rabble who will spit upon you as you pass, as they did upon Egalité. Since you have collected a treasure sufficient to maintain you for a long time, as well as those for whom you have made provision, I will expect you with anxiety, that we may enjoy a hearty laugh together at the expense of a nation as credulous as it is greedy of novelty." If, however, he had really formed such a plan, which would not have been inconsistent with his base spirit, the means of accomplishing it were probably never perfected.

At length his fate urged him on to the encounter. Robespierre descended to the Convention, where he had of late but rarely appeared, like the far nobler Dictator of Rome; and in his case also, a band of senators was ready to poniard the tyrant on the spot, had they not been afraid of the popularity he was supposed to enjoy, and which they feared might render them instant victims to the revenge of the Jacobins. The speech which Robespierre addressed to the Convention was as menacing as the first distant rustle of the hurricane, and dark and lurid as the eclipse which announces its approach. Anxious murmurs had been heard among the populace who filled the tribunes, or crowded the entrances of the hall of the Convention, indicating that a second 31st of May (being the day on which the Jacobins proscribed the Girondists) was about to witness a similar operation.

The first theme of the gloomy orator was the display of his own virtues and his services as a patriot, distinguishing as enemies to their country all whose opinions were contrary to his own. He then reviewed successively the various departments of the government, and loaded them in turn with censure and contempt. He declaimed against the supineness of the Committees of Public Safety and Public Security, as if the guillotine had never been in exercise; and he accused the Committee of Finance of having *counter-revolutionized* the revenues of the Republic. He enlarged with no less bitterness on withdrawing the artillery-men (always violent Jacobins) from Paris, and on the mode of management adopted in the conquered countries of Belgium. It seemed as if he wished to collect within the same lists all the functionaries of the state, and in the same breath to utter defiance to them all.

The usual honorary motion was made to print the discourse; but then the storm of opposition broke forth, and many speakers vociferously demanded, that before so far adopting the grave inculpations which it contained, the discourse

should be referred to the two Committees. Robespierre, in his turn, exclaimed, that this was subjecting his speech to the partial criticism and revision of the very parties whom he had accused. Exculpations and defences were heard on all sides against the charges which had been thus sweepingly brought forward; and there were many deputies who complained in no obscure terms of individual tyranny, and of a conspiracy on foot to outlaw and murder such part of the Convention as might be disposed to offer resistance. Robespierre was but feebly supported, save by Saint Just, Couthon, and by his own brother. After a stormy debate, in which the Convention were alternately swayed by their fear and their hatred of Robespierre, the discourse was finally referred to the Committees, instead of being printed; and the haughty and sullen Dictator saw, in the open slight thus put on his measures and opinions, the sure mark of his approaching fall.

He carried his complaints to the Jacobin Club, to repose, as he expressed it, his patriotic sorrows in their virtuous bosoms, where alone he hoped to find succour and sympathy. To this partial audience he renewed, in a tone of yet greater audacity, the complaints with which he had loaded every branch of the government, and the Representative Body itself. He reminded those around him of various heroic eras, when their presence and their pikes had decided the votes of the trembling deputies. He reminded them of their pristine actions of revolutionary vigour—asked them if they had forgot the road to the Convention, and concluded by pathetically assuring them, that if they forsook him, “he stood resigned to his fate; and they should behold with what courage he would drink the fatal hemlock.” The artist, David, caught him by the hand as he closed, exclaiming, in rapture at his elocution, “I will drink it with thee.”

The distinguished painter has been reproached, as having, on the subsequent day, declined the pledge which he seemed so eagerly to embrace. But there were many of his original opinion, at the time he expressed it so boldly; and had Robespierre possessed either military talents, or even decided courage, there was nothing to have prevented him from placing himself that very night at the head of a desperate insurrection of the Jacobins and their followers.

Payan, the successor of Hebert, actually proposed that the Jacobins should instantly march against the two Committees, which Robespierre charged with being the focus of the anti-revolutionary machinations, surprise their handful of guards, and stifle the evil with which the state was menaced, even in the very cradle. This plan was deemed too hazardous to be adopted, although it was one of those sudden and master-strokes of policy which Machiavel would have recommended. The fire of the Jacobins spent itself in tumult and threatening, and in expelling from the bosom of their society Collot d’Herbois, Tallien, and about thirty other deputies of the Mountain party, whom they considered as specially leagued to effect the downfall of Robespierre, and whom they drove from their society with execrations and even blows.

Collot d’Herbois, thus outraged, went straight from the meeting of the Jacobins to the place where the Committee of Public Safety was still sitting, in consultation on the report which they had to make to the Convention the next day upon the speech of Robespierre. Saint Just, one of their number, though warmly attached to the Dictator, had been intrusted by the Committee with the delicate task of drawing up that report. It was a step towards reconciliation; but the entrance of Collot d’Herbois, frantic with the insults he had received, broke off all hope of accommodation betwixt the friends of Danton and those of Robespierre. D’Herbois exhausted himself in threats against Saint Just, Couthon, and their master, Robespierre, and they parted on terms of mortal and avowed enmity. Every exertion now was used by the associated conspirators against the power of Robespierre, to collect and combine against him the whole forces of the Convention, to alarm the deputies of The Plain with fears for themselves, and to awaken the rage of the Mountaineers, against whose

throat the Dictator now waved the sword, which their short-sighted policy had placed in his hands. Lists of proscribed deputies were handed around, said to have been copied from the tablets of the Dictator: genuine or false, they obtained universal credit and currency; and those whose names stood on the fatal scrolls, engaged themselves for protection in the league against their enemy. The opinion that his fall could not be delayed now became general.

This sentiment was so commonly entertained in Paris on the 9th Thermidor, or 27th July, that a herd of about eighty victims, who were in the act of being dragged to the guillotine, were nearly saved by means of it. The people, in a generous burst of compassion, began to gather in crowds, and interrupted the melancholy procession, as if the power which presided over these hideous exhibitions had already been deprived of energy. But the hour was not come. The vile Henriot, commandant of the National Guards, came up with fresh forces, and on the day destined to be the last of his own life, proved the means of carrying to execution this crowd of unhappy and doubtless innocent persons.

On this eventful day Robespierre arrived in the Convention, and beheld The Mountain in close array and completely manned, while, as in the case of Catiline, the bench on which he himself was accustomed to sit, seemed purposely deserted. Saint Just, Couthon, Le Bas (his brother-in-law), and the younger Robespierre, were the only deputies of name who stood prepared to support him. But could he make an effectual struggle, he might depend upon the aid of the servile Barrere, a sort of Belial in the Convention, the meanest, yet not the least able, amongst those fallen spirits, who, with great adroitness and ingenuity, as well as wit and eloquence, caught opportunities as they arose, and was eminently dexterous in being always strong upon the strongest, and safe upon the safest side. There was a tolerably numerous party ready, in times so dangerous, to attach themselves to Barrere, as a leader who professed to guide them to safety if not to honour; and it was the existence of this vacillating and uncertain body, whose ultimate motions could never be calculated upon, which rendered it impossible to presage with assurance the event of any debate in the Convention during this dangerous period.

Saint Just arose, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, to make, after his own manner, not theirs, a report on the discourse of Robespierre on the previous evening. He had begun a harangue in the tone of his patron, declaring that, were the tribune which he occupied the Tarpeian rock itself, he would not the less, placed as he stood there, discharge the duties of a patriot.—“I am about,” he said, “to lift the veil.”—“I tear it asunder,” said Tallien, interrupting him. “The public interest is sacrificed by individuals, who come hither to speak exclusively in their own name, and conduct themselves as superior to the whole Convention.” He forced Saint Just from the tribune, and a violent debate ensued.

Billaud Varennes called the attention of the Assembly to the sitting of the Jacobin Club on the preceding evening. He declared the military force of Paris was placed under the command of Henriot, a traitor and a parricide, who was ready to march the soldiers whom he commanded against the Convention. He denounced Robespierre himself as a second Catiline, artful as well as ambitious, whose system it had been to nurse jealousies and inflame dissensions in the Convention, so as to disunite parties, and even individuals, from each other, attack them in detail, and thus destroy those antagonists separately, upon whose combined and united strength he dared not have looked.

The Convention echoed with applause every violent expression of the orator, and when Robespierre sprung to the tribune, his voice was drowned by a general shout of “Down with the tyrant!” Tallien moved the denunciation of Robespierre, with the arrest of Henriot, his staff-officers, and of others connected with the meditated violence on the Convention. He had undertaken to lead the attack upon the tyrant, he said, and to poniard him in the Convention itself,

if the members did not show courage enough to enforce the law against him. With these words he brandished an unsheathed poniard, as if about to make his purpose good. Robespierre still struggled hard to obtain audience, but the tribune was adjudged to Barrere; and the part taken against the fallen Dictator by that versatile and self-interested statesman, was the most absolute sign that his overthrow was irrecoverable. Torrents of invective were now uttered from every quarter of the hall, against him whose single word was wont to hush it into silence.

The scene was dreadful; yet not without its use to those who may be disposed to look at it as an extraordinary crisis, in which human passions were brought so singularly into collision. While the vaults of the hall echoed with exclamations from those who had hitherto been the accomplices, the flatterers, the followers, at least the timid and overawed assentators to the dethroned demagogue—he himself, breathless, foaming, exhausted, like the hunter of classical antiquity when on the point of being overpowered and torn to pieces by his own hounds, tried in vain to raise those screech-owl notes, by which the Convention had formerly been terrified and put to silence. He appealed for a hearing from the President of the Assembly, to the various parties of which it was composed. Rejected by the Mountaineers, his former associates, who now headed the clamour against him, he applied to the Girondists, few and feeble as they were, and to the more numerous but equally helpless deputies of The Plain, with whom they sheltered. The former shook him from them with disgust, the last with horror. It was in vain he reminded individuals that he had spared their lives, while at his mercy. This might have been applied to every member in the house; to every man in France; for who was it during two years that had lived on other terms than under Robespierre's permission? and deeply must he internally have regretted the clemency, as he might term it, which had left so many with ungashed throats to bay at him. But his agitated and repeated appeals were repulsed by some with indignation, by others with sullen, or embarrassed and timid silence.

A British historian must say, that even Robespierre ought to have been heard in his defence; and that such calmness would have done honour to the Convention, and dignified their final sentence of condemnation. As it was, they no doubt treated the guilty individual according to his deserts; but they fell short of that regularity and manly staidness of conduct which was due to themselves and to the law, and which would have given to the punishment of the demagogue the effect and weight of a solemn and deliberate sentence, in place of its seeming the result of the hasty and precipitate seizure of a temporary advantage.

Haste was, however, necessary, and must have appeared more so at such a crisis than perhaps it really was. Much must be pardoned to the terrors of the moment, the horrid character of the culprit, and the necessity of hurrying to a decisive conclusion. We have been told that his last audible words, contending against the exclamations of hundreds, and the bell which the President was ringing incessantly, and uttered in the highest tones which despair could give to a voice naturally shrill and discordant, dwelt long on the memory, and haunted the dreams, of many who heard him:—"President of assassins," he screamed, "for the last time I demand privilege of speech!"—After this exertion his breath became short and faint; and while he still uttered broken murmurs and hoarse ejaculations, the members of The Mountain called out, that the blood of Danton choked his voice.

The tumult was closed by a decree of arrest against Robespierre, his brother, Couthon, and Saint Just; Le Bas was included on his own motion, and indeed could scarce have escaped the fate of his brother-in-law, though his conduct then, and subsequently, showed more energy than that of the others. Couthon, hugging in his bosom the spaniel upon which he was wont to exhaust the over-

flowing of his affected sensibility, appealed to his decrepitude, and asked whether, maimed of proportion and activity as he was, he could be suspected of nourishing plans of violence or ambition.—“Wretch,” said Legendre, “thou hast the strength of Hercules for the perpetration of crime.” Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, with Henriot, Commandant of the National Guards, and other satellites of Robespierre, were included in the doom of arrest.

The officers of the Legislative Body were ordered to lay hands on Robespierre; but such was the terror of his name, that they hesitated for some time to obey; and the reluctance of their own immediate satellites afforded the Convention an indifferent omen of the respect which was likely to be paid without doors to their decree against this powerful demagogue. Subsequent events seemed for a while to confirm the apprehensions thus excited.

The Convention had declared their sitting permanent, and had taken all precautions for appealing for protection to the large mass of citizens, who, wearied out by the reign of Terror, were desirous to close it at all hazards. They quickly had deputations from several of the neighbouring sections, declaring their adherence to the National Representatives, in whose defence they were arming, and (many undoubtedly prepared beforehand) were marching in all haste to the protection of the Convention. But they heard also the less pleasing tidings, that Henriot, having effected the dispersion of those citizens who had obstructed, as elsewhere mentioned, the execution of the eighty condemned persons, and consummated that final act of murder, was approaching the Tuilleries, where they had held their sitting, with a numerous staff, and such of the Jacobinical forces as could hastily be collected.

Happily for the Convention, this commandant of the National Guards, on whose presence of mind and courage the fate of France perhaps for the moment depended, was as stupid and cowardly as he was brutally ferocious. He suffered himself, without resistance, to be arrested by a few gens d’armes, the immediate guards of the Convention, headed by two of its members, who behaved in the emergency with equal prudence and spirit.

But fortune, or the demon whom he had served, afforded Robespierre another chance for safety, perhaps even for empire; for moments which a man of self-possession might have employed for escape, one of desperate courage might have used for victory, which, considering the divided and extremely unsettled state of the capital, was likely to be gained by the boldest competitor.

The arrested deputies had been carried from one prison to another, all the jailors refusing to receive under their official charge Robespierre, and those who had aided him in supplying their dark habitations with such a tide of successive inhabitants. At length the prisoners were secured in the office of the Committee of Public Safety. But by this time all was in alarm amongst the Commune of Paris, where Fleuriot the Mayor, and Payan the successor of Hebert, convoked the civic body, despatched municipal officers to raise the city and the Fauxbourgs in their name, and caused the tocsin to be rung. Payan speedily assembled a force sufficient to liberate Henriot, Robespierre, and the other arrested deputies, and to carry them to the Hotel de Ville, where about two thousand men were congregated, consisting chiefly of artillerymen, and of insurgents from the suburb of Saint Antoine, who already expressed their resolution of marching against the Convention. But the selfish and cowardly character of Robespierre was unfit for such a crisis. He appeared altogether confounded and overwhelmed with what had passed and was passing around him; and not one of all the victims of the reign of Terror felt its disabling influence so completely as he, the Despot who had so long directed its sway. He had not, even though the means must have been in his power, the presence of mind to disperse money in considerable sums, which of itself would not have failed to insure the support of the revolutionary rabble.

Meantime the Convention continued to maintain the bold and commanding

front which they had so suddenly and critically assumed. Upon learning the escape of the arrested deputies, and hearing of the insurrection at the Hotel de Ville, they instantly passed a decree outlawing Robespierre and his associates, inflicting a similar doom upon the Mayor of Paris, the Procureur and other members of the Commune, and charging twelve of their members, the boldest who could be selected, to proceed with the armed force to the execution of the sentence. The drums of the National Guards now beat to arms in all the sections under authority of the Convention, while the tocsin continued to summon assistance with its iron voice to Robespierre and the civic magistrates. Everything appeared to threaten a violent catastrophe, until it was seen clearly that the public voice, and especially amongst the National Guards, was declaring itself generally against the Terrorists.

The Hotel de Ville was surrounded by about fifteen hundred men, and cannon turned upon the doors. The force of the assailants was weakest in point of number, but their leaders were men of spirit, and night concealed their inferiority of force.

The deputies commissioned for the purpose read the decree of the Assembly to those whom they found assembled in front of the city-hall, and they shrunk from the attempt of defending it, some joining the assailants, others laying down their arms and dispersing. Meantime the deserted group of Terrorists within conducted themselves like scorpions, which, when surrounded by a circle of fire, are said to turn their stings on each other, and on themselves. Mutual and ferocious upbraiding took place among these miserable men. "Wretch, were these the means you promised to furnish?" said Payan to Henriot, whom he found intoxicated and incapable of resolution or exertion; and seizing on him as he spoke, he precipitated the revolutionary general from a window. Henriot survived the fall only to drag himself into a drain, in which he was afterwards discovered and brought out to execution. The younger Robespierre threw himself from the window, but had not the good fortune to perish on the spot. It seemed as if even the melancholy fate of suicide, the last refuge of guilt and despair, was denied to men who had so long refused every species of mercy to their fellow-creatures. Le Bas alone had calmness enough to despatch himself with a pistol-shot. Saint Just, after imploring his comrades to kill him, attempted his own life with an irresolute hand, and failed. Couthon lay beneath the table brandishing a knife, with which he repeatedly wounded his bosom, without daring to add force enough to reach his heart. Their chief, Robespierre, in an unsuccessful attempt to shoot himself, had only inflicted a horrible fracture on his under-jaw.

In this situation they were found like wolves in their lair, foul with blood, mutilated, despairing, and yet not able to die. Robespierre lay on a table in an anti-room, his head supported by a deal-box, and his hideous countenance half-hidden by a bloody and dirty cloth bound round the shattered chin.*

The captives were carried in triumph to the Convention, who, without admitting them to the bar, ordered them, as outlaws, for instant execution. As the fatal cars passed to the guillotine, those who filled them, but especially Robespierre, were overwhelmed with execrations from the friends and relatives of victims whom he had sent on the same melancholy road. The nature of his previous wound, from which the cloth had never been removed till the executioner tore it off, added to the torture of the sufferer. The shattered jaw dropped, and the wretch yelled aloud, to the horror of the spectators.† A masque taken

* It did not escape the minute observers of this scene, that he still held in his hand the bag which had contained the fatal pistol, and which was inscribed with the words *Au grand Monarque*, alluding to the sign, doubtless, of the gunsmith who sold the weapon, but singularly applicable to the high pretensions of the purchaser.

† The fate of no tyrant in story was so hideous at the conclusion, excepting perhaps that of Jugurtha.

from that dreadful head was long exhibited in different nations of Europe, and appalled the spectator by its ugliness, and the mixture of fiendish expression with that of bodily agony.

Thus fell Maximilian Robespierre, after having been the first person in the French Republic for nearly two years, during which time he governed it upon the principles of Nero or Caligula. His elevation to the situation which he held involved more contradictions than perhaps attach to any similar event in history. A low-born and low-minded tyrant was permitted to rule with the rod of the most frightful despotism a people, whose anxiety for liberty had shortly before rendered them unable to endure the rule of a humane and lawful sovereign. A dastardly coward arose to the command of one of the bravest nations in the world; and it was under the auspices of a man who dared scarce fire a pistol, that the greatest generals in France began their careers of conquest. He had neither eloquence nor imagination; but substituted in their stead a miserable, affected, bombastic style, which, until other circumstances gave him consequence, drew on him general ridicule. Yet against so poor an orator, all the eloquence of the philosophical Girondists, all the terrible powers of his associate Danton, employed in a popular assembly, could not enable them to make an effectual resistance. It may seem trifling to mention, that in a nation where a good deal of prepossession is excited by amiable manners and beauty of external appearance, the person who ascended to the highest power was not only ill-looking, but singularly mean in person, awkward and constrained in his address, ignorant how to set about pleasing even when he most desired to give pleasure, and as tiresome nearly as he was odious and heartless.

To compensate all these deficiencies, Robespierre had but an insatiable ambition, founded on a vanity which made him think himself capable of filling the highest situation; and therefore gave him daring, when to dare is frequently to achieve. He mixed a false and overstrained, but rather fluent species of bombastic composition, with the grossest flattery to the lowest classes of the people; in consideration of which, they could not but receive as genuine the praises which he always bestowed on himself. His prudent resolution to be satisfied with possessing the essence of power, without seeming to desire its rank and trappings, formed another art of cajoling the multitude. His watchful envy, his long-protracted but sure revenge, his craft, which to vulgar minds supplies the place of wisdom, were his only means of competing with his distinguished antagonists. And it seems to have been a merited punishment of the extravagances and abuses of the French Revolution, that it engaged the country in a state of anarchy which permitted a wretch such as we have described, to be for a long period master of her destiny. Blood was his element, like that of the other Terrorists, and he never fastened with so much pleasure on a new victim, as when he was at the same time an ancient associate. In an epitaph, of which the following couplet may serve as a translation, his life was represented as incompatible with the existence of the human race:—

“Here lies Robespierre—let no tear be shed:
Reader, if he had lived, thou hadst been dead.”

When the report of Robespierre's crimes was brought to the Convention, in which he is most justly charged with the intention of possessing himself of the government, the inconsistent accusation is added, that he plotted to restore the Bourbons; in support of which it is alleged that a seal, bearing a fleur-de-lis, was found at the Hotel de Ville. Not even the crimes of Robespierre were thought sufficiently atrocious, without their being mingled with a tendency to Royalism!

With this celebrated demagogue the reign of Terror may be said to have terminated, although those by whose agency the tyrant fell were as much Terrorists as himself, being, indeed, the principal members of the very Committees of Public Safety and Public Security, who had been his colleagues in

all the excesses of his revolutionary authority. Among the *Thermidoriens*, as the actors in Robespierre's downfall termed themselves, there were names almost as dreadful as that of the Dictator, for whom the ninth Thermidor proved the Ides of March. What could be hoped for from Collot d'Herbois, the butcher of the Lyonnoise—what from Billaud Varennes—what from Barras, who had directed the executions at Marseilles after its ephemeral revolt—what from Tallien, whose arms were dyed double red, from finger-nails to elbow, in the blood of the unfortunate emigrant gentlemen who were made prisoners at Quiberon? It seemed that only a new set of Septembrisers had succeeded, and that the same horrible principle would continue to be the moving spring of the government, under the direction of other chiefs indeed, but men who were scarce less familiar with its horrors, than was the departed tyrant.

Men looked hopelessly towards the Convention, long rather like the corpse of a legislative assembly, actuated, during its apparent activity, like the supposed Vampire, by an infernal spirit not its own, which urged it to go forth and drink blood, but which, deserted by the animating demon, must, it was to be expected, sink to the ground in helpless incapacity. What could be expected from Barrere, the ready panegyrist of Robespierre, the tool who was ever ready to show to the weak and the timid the exact point where their safety recommended to them to join the ranks of the wicked and the strong? But in spite of these discouraging circumstances, the feelings of humanity, and a spirit of self-protection, dictating a determined resistance to the renovation of the horrid system under which the country had so long suffered, began to show itself both in the Convention and without doors. Encouraged by the fall of Robespierre, complaints poured in against his agents on all sides. Lebon was accused before the Convention by a deputation from Cambrai; and as he ascended the Tribune to put himself on his defence, he was generally hailed as the hangman of Robespierre. The monster's impudence supported him in a sort of defence; and when it was objected to him that he had had the common executioner to dine in company with him, he answered, "That delicate people might think that wrong; but Lequinio (another Jacobin proconsul of horrible celebrity) had made the same useful citizen the companion of his leisure, and hours of relaxation." He acknowledged with the same equanimity, that an aristocrat being condemned to the guillotine, he kept him lying in the usual posture upon his back, with his eyes turned up to the axe, which was suspended above his throat,—in short, in all the agonies which can agitate the human mind, when within an hair's-breadth of the distance of the great separation between Time and Eternity,—until he had read to him, at length, the Gazette which had just arrived, giving an account of a victory gained by the Republican armies. This monster, with Heron, Rossignol, and other agents of terror more immediately connected with Robespierre, were ordered for arrest, and shortly after for execution. Tallien and Barras would have here paused in the retrospect; but similar accusations now began to pour in from every quarter, and when once stated, were such as commanded public attention in the most forcible manner. Those who invoked vengeance, backed the solicitations of each other—the general voice of mankind was with them; and leaders who had shared the excesses of the Reign of Terror, Thermidoriens as they were, began to see some danger of being themselves buried in the ruins of the power which they had overthrown.

Tallien, who is supposed to have taken the lead in the extremely difficult navigation which lay before the vessel of the state, seems to have experienced a change in his own sentiments, at least his principles of action, inclining him to the cause of humanity. He was also, it is said, urged to so favourable a modification of feelings by his newly married wife, formerly Madame Fontenai, who, bred a royalist, had herself been a victim to the law of suspicion, and was released from a prison to receive the hand, and influence the activity, of

the republican statesman. Barras, who, as commanding the armed force, might be termed the hero of the 9th Thermidor, was supposed to be also inclined towards humanity and moderation.

Thus disposed to destroy the monstrous system which had taken root in France, and which, indeed, in the increasing impatience of the country, they would have found it impossible to maintain, Tallien and Barras had to struggle, at the same time, to diminish and restrict the general demand for revenge, at a time when, if past tyranny was to be strictly inquired into and punished, the doom, as Carrier himself told them, would have involved everything in the Convention, excepting perhaps the President's bell and his arm-chair. So powerful were these feelings of resisting a retrospect, that the Thermidoriens declined to support Le Cointre in bringing forward a general charge of inculpation against the two Committees of Public Safety and Public Security, in which accusation, notwithstanding their ultimate quarrel with Robespierre, he showed their intimate connexion with him, and their joint agency in all which had been imputed to him as guilt. But the time was not mature for hazarding such a general accusation, and it was rejected by the Convention with marks of extreme displeasure.

Still, however, the general voice of humanity demanded some farther atonement for two years of outrage, and to satisfy this demand, the Thermidoriens set themselves to seek victims connected more immediately with Robespierre; while they endeavoured gradually to form a party, which, setting out upon a principle of amnesty, and oblivion of the past, should in future pay some regard to that preservation of the lives and property of the governed, which, in every other system saving that which had been just overthrown in France, is regarded as the principal end of civil government. With a view to the consolidation of such a party, the restrictions of the press were removed, and men of talent and literature, silenced during the reign of Robespierre, were once more admitted to exercise their natural influence in favour of civil order and religion. Marmontel, La Harpe, and others, who, in their youth, had been enrolled in the list of Voltaire's disciples, and amongst the infidels of the *Encyclopedie*, now made amends for their youthful errors, by exerting themselves in the cause of good morals, and of a regulated government.

At length followed that general and long-desired measure, which gave liberty to so many thousands, by suspending the law denouncing suspected persons, and emptying at once of their inhabitants the prisons, which had hitherto only transmitted them to the guillotine. The tales which these victims of Jacobinism had to repeat, when revealing the secrets of their prison-house, together with the moral influence produced by such an universal gaol delivery, and the reunion which it effected amongst friends and relations that had been so long separated, tended greatly to strengthen the hands of the Thermidoriens, who still boasted of that name, and to consolidate a rational and moderate party, both in the capital and provinces. It is, however, by no means to be wondered at, that the liberated sufferers showed a disposition to exercise retribution in a degree which their liberators trembled to indulge, lest it might have recoiled upon themselves. Still both parties united against the remains of the Jacobins.

A singular and melancholy species of force supported these movements towards civilization and order. It was levied among the orphans and youthful friends of those who had fallen under the fatal guillotine, and amounted in number to two or three thousand young men, who acted in concert, were distinguished by black collars, and by their hair being plaited and turned up *à la victime*, as prepared for the guillotine. This costume was adopted in memory of the principle of mourning on which they were associated. These volunteers were not regularly armed or disciplined, but formed a sort of free corps, who opposed themselves readily and effectually to the Jacobins, when they attempted their ordinary revolutionary tactics of exciting partial insurrections, and intimidating the orderly citizens by shouts and violence. Many scuffles took place

betwixt the parties, with various success; but ultimately the spirit and courage of the young Avengers seemed to give them daily a more decided superiority. The Jacobins dared not show themselves, that is, to avouch their principles, either at the places of public amusement, or in the Palais Royal, or the Tuilleries, all of which had formerly witnessed their victories. Their assemblies now took place under some appearance of secrecy, and were held in remote streets, and with such marks of diminished audacity as augured that the spirit of the party was crestfallen.

Still, however, the Jacobin party possessed dreadful leaders in Billaud Varrennes and Collot d'Herbois, who repeatedly attempted to awaken its terrific energy. These demagogues had joined, indeed, in the struggle against Robespierre, but it was with the expectation that an Amurath was to succeed an Amurath—a Jacobin a Jacobin—not for the purpose of relaxing the reins of the revolutionary government, far less changing its character. These veteran revolutionists must be considered as separate from those who called themselves Thermidoriens, though they lent their assistance to the revolution on the 9th Thermidor. They viewed as deserters and apostates Legendre, Le Cointre, and others, above all Tallien and Barras, who, in the full height of their career, had paused to take breath, and were now endeavouring to shape a course so different from that which they had hitherto pursued.

These genuine Sans-Culottes endeavoured to rest their own power and popularity upon the same basis as formerly. They re-opened the sittings of the Jacobin Club, shut up on the 9th Thermidor. This ancient revolutionary cavern again heard its roof resound with denunciations, by which Vadier, Billaud Varrennes, and others, devoted to the infernal deities Le Cointre, and those, who, they complained, wished to involve all honest Republicans in the charges brought against Robespierre and his friends. Those threats, however, were no longer rapidly followed by the thunder-bolts which used to attend such flashes of Jacobin eloquence. Men's homes were now in comparison safe. A man might be named in a Jacobin Club as an Aristocrat, or a Moderate, and yet live. In fact, the demagogues were more anxious to secure immunity for their past crimes, than at present to incur new censure. The tide of general opinion was flowing strongly against them, and a singular incident increased its power, and rendered it irresistible.

The Parisians had naturally enough imagined, that the provinces could have no instances of jacobinical cruelty and misrule to describe, more tragic and appalling than the numerous executions which the capital had exhibited every day. But the arrival of eighty prisoners, citizens of Nantes, charged with the usual imputations cast upon suspected persons, undeceived them. These captives had been sent, for the purpose of being tried at Paris before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Fortunately, they did not arrive till after Robespierre's fall, and consequently when they were looked upon rather as oppressed persons than as criminals, and were listened to more as accusers of those by whom they were persecuted, than as culprits on their defence.

It was then that the metropolis first heard of horrors which we have formerly barely hinted at. It was then they were told of crowds of citizens, most of whom had been favourable to the republican order of things, and had borne arms against the Vendéans in their attack upon Nantes; men accused upon grounds equally slight, and incapable of proof, having been piled together in dungeons, where the air was pestilential from ordure, from the carcasses of the dead, and the infectious diseases of the dying. It was then they heard of Republican baptism and Republican marriages—of men, women, and children sprawling together, like toads and frogs in the season of spring, in the waters of the Loire, too shallow to afford them instant death. It was then they heard of an hundred other abominations—how those uppermost upon the expiring mass prayed to be thrust into the deeper water, that they might have the means

of death—and of much more that humanity forbears to detail; but in regard to which, the sharp, sudden, and sure blow of the Parisian guillotine was clemency.

This tale of horrors could not be endured; and the point of immediate collision between the Thermidoriens, compelled and driven onward by the public voice and feeling, and the remnant of the old Jacobin faction, became the accusation of Carrier, the commissioned deputy under whom these unheard-of horrors had been perpetrated. Vengeance on the head of this wretch was so loudly demanded, that it could not be denied even by those influential persons, who, themselves deeply interested in preventing recrimination, would willingly have drawn a veil over the past. Through the whole impeachment and defence, the Thermidoriens stood on the most delicate and embarrassing ground; for horrid as his actions were, he had in general their own authority to plead for them. For example, a letter was produced with these directions to General Haxo—"It is my plan to carry off from that accursed country all manner of subsistence or provisions for man or beast, all forage—in a word, *everything*—give all the buildings to the flames, and exterminate the whole inhabitants. Oppose their being relieved by a single grain of corn for their subsistence. I give thee the most positive, most imperious order. Thou art answerable for the execution from this moment. In a word, leave nothing in that proscribed country—let the means of subsistence, provisions, forage, *everything*—absolutely everything, be removed to Nantes." The representatives of the French nation heard with horror such a fiendish commission; but with what sense of shame and abasement must they have listened to Carrier's defence, in which he proved he was only literally executing the decrees of the very Convention which was now inquiring into his conduct! A lunatic, who, in a lucid moment, hears some one recount the crimes and cruelties he committed in his frenzy, might perhaps enter into their feelings. They were not the less obliged to continue the inquiry, fraught as it was with circumstances so disgraceful to themselves; and Carrier's impeachment and conviction proved the point on which the Thermidoriens, and those who continued to entertain the violent popular opinions, were now at issue.

The atrocious Carrier was taken under the avowed protection of the Jacobin Club, before which audience he made out a case which was heard with applause. He acknowledged his enormities, and pleaded his patriotic zeal; ridiculed the delicacy of those who cared whether an aristocrat died by a single blow, or a protracted death; was encouraged throughout by acclamations, and received assurances of protection from the remnant of that once formidable association. But their magic influence was dissolved—their best orators had fallen successively by each other's impeachment—and of their most active ruffians, some had been killed or executed, some had fled, or lay concealed, many were in custody, and the rest had become intimidated. Scarce a man who had signalized himself in the French Revolution, but had enjoyed the applause of these demagogues, as versatile in personal attachments, as steady in their execrable principles—scarce one whom they had not been active in sacrificing.

Nevertheless, those members of the Revolutionary Committees, who had so lately lent their aid to dethrone Robespierre, the last idol of the Society, ventured to invoke them in their own defence, and that of their late agents. Billaud Varennes, addressing the Jacobins, spoke of the Convention as men spared by their clemency during the reign of Robespierre, who now rewarded the Mountain deputies by terming them Men of Blood, and by seeking the death of those worthy patriots, Joseph Lebon and Carrier, who were about to fall under their counter-revolutionary violence. These excellent citizens, he said, were persecuted, merely because their zeal for the Republic had been somewhat ardent—their forms of proceeding a little rash and severe. He invoked the awaking of the Lion—a new revolutionary rising of the people, to tear the

limbs and drink the blood—(these were the very words)—of those who had dared to beard them. The meeting dispersed with shouts, and vows to answer to the halloo of their leaders.

But the opposite party had learned that such menaces were to be met otherwise than by merely awaiting the issue, and then trying the force of remonstrances, or the protection of the law, with those to whom the stronger force is the only satisfying reason.

Well organized, and directed by military officers in many instances, large bands of Anti-jacobins, as we may venture to call the volunteer force already mentioned, appeared in the neighbourhood of the suburbs, and kept in check those from whom the Mother Club expected its strongest aid; while the main body of the young Avengers marched down upon the citadel of the enemy, and invested the Jacobin Club itself in the midst of its sitting. These demagogues made but a wretched defence when attacked by that species of popular violence, which they had always considered as their own especial weapon; and the facility with which they were dispersed amid ridicule and ignominy, served to show how easily, on former occasions, the mutual understanding and spirited exertion of well-disposed men could have at any time prevented criminal violence from obtaining the mastery. Had La Fayette marched against and shut up the Jacobin Club, the world would have been spared many horrors, and in all probability he would have found the task as easy as it proved to those bands of incensed young men.—It must be mentioned, though the recital is almost unworthy of history, that the female Jacobins came to rally and assist their male associates, and that several of them were seized upon and punished in a manner, which might excellently suit their merits, but which shows that the young associates for maintaining order were not sufficiently aristocratic to be under the absolute restraints imposed by the rules of chivalry. It is impossible, however, to grudge the flagellation administered upon this memorable occasion.

When the Jacobins had thus fallen in the popular contest, they could expect little success in the Convention; and the less, that the impulse of general feeling seemed about to recall into that Assembly, by the reversal of their outlawry, the remnant of the unhappy Girondists, and other members, who had been arbitrarily proscribed on the 31st of May. The measure was delayed for some time, as tending to effect a change in the composition of the House, which the ruling party might find inconvenient. At length upwards of sixty deputies were first declared free of the outlawry, and finally readmitted into the bosom of the Convention, with heads which had been so long worn in insecurity, that it had greatly cooled their love of political theory.

In the meantime the government, through means of a revolutionary tribunal, acting however with much more of legal formality and caution than that of Robespierre, made a sacrifice to the public desire of vengeance. Lebon, Carrier, already mentioned, Fouquier, the public accuser under Robespierre, and one or two others of the same class, selected on account of the peculiar infamy and cruelty of their conduct, were condemned and executed as an atonement for injured humanity.

Here probably the Thermidoriens would have wished the reaction to stop; but this was impossible. Barras and Tallien perceived plainly, that with whatever caution and clemency they might proceed towards their old allies of The Mountain, there was still no hope of anything like reconciliation; and that their best policy was to get rid of them as speedily and as quietly as they could. The Mountain, like a hydra whose heads bourgeoned, according to the poetic expression, as fast as they were cut off, continued to hiss at and menace the government with unwearied malignity, and to agitate the metropolis by their intrigues, which were the more easily conducted that the winter was severe, bread had become scarce and high-priced, and the common people of course angry and discontented. Scarcity is always the grievance of which the lower

classes must be most sensible; and when it is remembered that Robespierre, though at the expense of the grossest injustice to the rest of the kingdom, always kept bread beneath a certain *maximum* or fixed price in the metropolis, it will not be wondered at that the population of Paris should be willing to favour those who followed his maxims. The impulse of these feelings, joined to the machinations of the Jacobins, showed itself in many disorders.

At length the Convention, pressed by shame on the one side and fear on the other, saw the necessity of some active measure, and appointed a commission to consider and report upon the conduct of the four most obnoxious Jacobin chiefs, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud Varennes, Vadier, and Barrere. The report was of course unfavourable; yet upon the case being considered, the Convention were satisfied to condemn them to transportation to Cayenne. Some resistance was offered to this sentence, so mild in proportion to what those who underwent it had been in the habit of inflicting; but it was borne down, and the sentence was carried into execution. Collot d'Herbois, the demolisher and depopulator of Lyons, is said to have died in the common hospital, in consequence of drinking off at once a whole bottle of ardent spirits. Billaud Varennes spent his time in teaching the innocent parrots of Guiana the frightful jargon of the Revolutionary Committee; and finally perished in misery.

These men both belonged to that class of atheists, who, looking up towards heaven, loudly and literally defied the Deity to make his existence known by lanching his thunderbolts. Miracles are not wrought on the challenge of a blasphemer more than on the demand of a sceptic; but both these unhappy men had probably before their death reason to confess, that in abandoning the wicked to their own free will, a greater penalty results even in this life, than if Providence had been pleased to inflict the immediate doom which they had impiously defied.

The notice of one more desperate attempt at popular insurrection, finishes, in a great measure, the history of Jacobinism and of The Mountain; of those, in short, who professed the most outrageous popular doctrines, considered as a political body. They continued to receive great facilities from the increasing dearth, and to find ready opportunities of agitating the discontented part of a population, disgusted by the diminution not only of comforts, but of the very means of subsistence. The Jacobins, therefore, were easily able to excite an insurrection of the same description as those which had repeatedly influenced the fate of the Revolution, and which, in fact, proceeded to greater extremities than any which had preceded it in the same desperate game. The rallying word of the rabble was "Bread, and the Democratic Constitution of 1793;" a constitution which the Jacobins had projected, but never attempted seriously to put into force. No insurrection had yet appeared more formidable in numbers, or better provided in pikes, muskets, and cannon. They invested the Convention,* without experiencing any effectual opposition; burst into the hall, assassinated one deputy, Ferrand, by a pistol-shot, and paraded his head amongst his trembling brethren, and through the neighbouring streets and environs on a pike. They presented Boissy d'Anglas, the President, with the motions which they demanded should be passed; but were defeated by the firmness with which he preferred his duty to his life.

The steadiness of the Convention gave at length confidence to the friends of good order without. The National Guards began to muster strong, and the insurgents to lose spirits. They were at length, notwithstanding their formidable appearance, dispersed with very little effort. The tumult, however, was renewed on the two following days; until at length the necessity of taking sufficient measures to end it at once and for ever, became evident to all.

* 20th May 1795.

Pichegru, the conqueror of Holland, who chanced to be in Paris at the time, was placed at the head of the National Guards and the volunteers, whose character we have noticed elsewhere. At the head of this force, he marched in military order towards the Fauxbourg Saint Antoine, which had poured forth repeatedly the bands of armed insurgents that were the principal force of the Jacobins.

After a show of defending themselves, the inhabitants of this disorderly suburb were at length obliged to surrender up their arms of every kind. Those pikes, which had so often decided the destinies of France, were now delivered up by cart-loads; and the holy right of insurrection was rendered in future a more dangerous and difficult task.

Encouraged by the success of this decisive measure, the government proceeded against some of the Terrorists whom they had hitherto spared, but whose fate was now determined, in order to strike dismay into their party. Six Jacobins, accounted among the most ferocious of the class, were arrested as encouragers of the late insurrection, and delivered up to be tried by a military commission. They were all deputies of 'The Mountain gang.' Certain of their doom, they adopted a desperate resolution. Among the whole party, they possessed but one knife, but they resolved it should serve them all for the purpose of suicide. The instant their sentence was pronounced, one stabbed himself with this weapon; another snatched the knife from his companion's dying hand, plunged it in his own bosom, and handed it to the third, who imitated the dreadful example. Such was the consternation of the attendants, that no one arrested the fatal progress of the weapon—all fell either dead or desperately wounded—the last were despatched by the guillotine.

After this decisive victory, and last dreadful catastrophe, Jacobinism, considered as a pure and unmixed party, can scarce be said to have again raised its head in France, although its leaven has gone to qualify and characterize, in some degree, more than one of the different parties which have succeeded them. As a political sect, the Jacobins can be compared to none that ever existed, for none but themselves ever thought of an organized, regular, and continued system of murdering and plundering the rich, that they might debauch the poor by the distribution of their spoils. They bear, however, some resemblance to the frantic followers of John of Leyden and Knipperdoling, who occupied Munster in the seventeenth century, and committed, in the name of Religion, the same frantic horrors which the French Jacobins did in that of Freedom. In both cases, the courses adopted by these parties were most foreign to, and inconsistent with, the alleged motives of their conduct. The Anabaptists practised every species of vice and cruelty, by the dictates, they said, of inspiration—the Jacobins imprisoned three hundred thousand of their countrymen in name of liberty, and put to death more than half the number, under the sanction of fraternity.

Now at length, however, society began to resume its ordinary course, and the business and pleasures of life succeeded each other as usual. But even social pleasures brought with them strange and gloomy associations with that Valley of the Shadow of Death, through which the late pilgrimage of France appeared to have lain. An assembly for dancing, very much frequented by the young of both sexes, and highly fashionable, was called the "Ball of the Victims." The qualification for attendance was the having lost some near and valued relation or friend in the late reign of Terror. The hair and head-dress were so arranged as to resemble the preparations made for the guillotine, and the motto adopted was, "We dance amidst tombs." In no country but France could the incidents have taken place which gave rise to this association; and certainly in no country but France would they have been used for such a purpose.

But it is time to turn from the consideration of the internal government of

France, to its external relations; in regard to which the destinies of the country rose to such a distinguished height, that it is hardly possible to reconcile the two pictures of a nation, triumphant at every point against all Europe coalesced against her, making efforts and obtaining victories, to which history had been yet a stranger; while at the same time her affairs at home were directed by ferocious blood-thirsty savages, such as Robespierre. The Republic, regarded in her foreign and domestic relations, might be fancifully compared to the tomb erected over some hero, presenting, without, trophies of arms and the emblems of victory, while, within, there lies only a mangled and corrupted corpse.

† CHAPTER XVIII.

Retrospective View of the External Relations of France—Her great Military Successes—Whence they arose.—Effect of the Compulsory Levies.—Military Genius and Character of the French.—French Generals.—New Mode of training the Troops.—Light Troops.—Successive Attacks in Column.—Attachment of the Soldiers to the Revolution.—Also of the Generals.—Carnot.—Effect of the French Principles preached to the Countries invaded by their Arms.—Close of the Revolution with the fall of Robespierre.—Reflections upon what was to succeed.

It may be said of victory, as the English satirist has said of wealth, that it cannot be of much importance in the eye of Heaven, considering in what unworthy association it is sometimes found. While the rulers of France were disowning the very existence of a Deity, her armies appeared to move almost as if protected by the especial favour of Providence. Our former recapitulation presented a slight sketch of the perilous state of France in 1792, surrounded by foes on almost every frontier, and with difficulty maintaining her ground on any point; yet the lapse of two years found her victorious, nay, triumphantly victorious, on all.

On the north-eastern frontier, the English, after a series of hard fighting, had lost not only Flanders, on which we left them advancing, but Holland itself, and had been finally driven with great loss to abandon the Continent. The King of Prussia had set out on his first campaign as the chief hero of the coalition, and had undertaken that the Duke of Brunswick, his general, should put down the revolution in France as easily as he had done that of Holland. But finding the enterprise which he had undertaken was above his strength; that his accumulated treasures were exhausted in an unsuccessful war; and that Austria, not Prussia, was regarded as the head of the coalition, he drew off his forces, after they had been weakened by more than one defeat, and made a separate peace with France, in which he renounced to the new Republic the sovereignty of all those portions of the Prussian territory which lay on the east side of the Rhine. The king, to make up for these losses, sought a more profitable, though less honourable field of warfare, and concurred with Russia and Austria in effecting by conquest a final partition and appropriation of Poland, on the same unprincipled plan on which the first had been conducted.

Spain, victorious at the beginning of the conquest, had been of late so unsuccessful in opposing the French armies, that it was the opinion of many that her character for valour and patriotism was lost for ever. Catalonia was overrun by the Republicans, Rosas taken, and no army intervening betwixt the victors and Madrid, the King of Spain was obliged to clasp hands with the murderers of his kinsman, Louis XVI., acknowledge the French Republic, and withdraw from the coalition.

Austria had well sustained her ancient renown, both by the valour of her troops, the resolution of her cabinet, and the talents of one or two of her generals,—the Archduke Charles in particular, and the veteran Wurmser. Yet she too had succumbed under the Republican superiority. Belgium, as the French called Flanders, was, as already stated, totally lost; and war along the Rhine was continued by Austria, more for defence than with a hope of conquest.

So much and so generally had the fortune of war declared in favour of France upon all points, even while she was herself sustaining the worst of evils from the worst of tyrannies. There must have been unquestionably several reasons for such success as seemed to attend universally on the arms of the Republic, instead of being limited to one peculiarly efficient army, or to one distinguished general.

The first and most powerful cause must be looked for in the extraordinary energy of the Republican government, which, from its very commencement, threw all subordinate considerations aside, and devoted the whole resources of the country to its military defence. It was then that France fully learned the import of the word “Requisition,” as meaning that which government needs, and which must at all hazards be supplied. Compulsory levies were universally resorted to; and the undoubted right which a state has to call upon each of its subjects to arise in defence of the community, was extended into the power of sending them upon expeditions of foreign conquest.

In the month of March 1793, a levy of two hundred thousand men was appointed, and took place; but by a subsequent decree of the 21st August in the same year, a more gigantic mode of recruiting was resorted to.

Every man in France able to bear arms was placed at the orders of the state, and being divided into classes, the youngest, to the amount of five hundred thousand, afterwards augmented to a million, were commanded to march for immediate action. The rest of society were to be so disposed of as might best second the efforts of the actual combatants. The married men were to prepare arms and forward convoys,—the women to make uniforms,—the children to scrape lint,—and the old men to preach Republicanism. All property was in like manner devoted to maintaining the war—all buildings were put to military purposes—all arms appropriated to the public service—and all horses, excepting those which might be necessary for agriculture, seized on for the cavalry, and other military services. Representatives of the people were named to march with the various levies,—those terrible commissioners, who punished no fault with a slighter penalty than death. No excuse was sustained for want of personal compliance with the requisition for personal service—no delay permitted—no substitution allowed—actual and literal compliance was demanded from every one, and of what rank soever. Conscripts who failed to appear, resisted, or fled, were subjected to the penalties which attached to emigration.

By successive decrees of this peremptory nature, enforced with the full energy of revolutionary violence, the government succeeded in bringing into the field, and maintaining, forces to an amount more than double those of their powerful enemies; and the same means of supply—arbitrary requisition, namely—which brought them out, supported and maintained them during the campaign; so that, while there remained food and clothing of any kind in the country, the soldier was sure to be fed, paid, and equipped.

There are countries, however, in which the great numerical superiority thus attained is of little consequence, when a confused levy *en masse* of raw, inexperienced, and disorderly boys, are opposed against the ranks of a much smaller, but a regular and well-disciplined army, such as in every respect is that of Austria. On such occasions the taunting speech of Alaric recurs to recollection,—“The thicker the hay the more easily it is mowed.” But this

was not found to be the case with the youth of France, who adopted the habits most necessary for a soldier with singular facility and readiness. Military service has been popular amongst them in all ages; and the stories of the grandsire in a French cottage have always tended to excite in his descendants ideas familiar with a military condition. They do not come to it as a violent change of life, which they had never previously contemplated, and where all is new and terrible; but as to a duty which every Frenchman is liable to discharge, and which is as natural to him as to his father or grandfather before him.

Besides this propensity, and undoubtedly connected with it, a young Frenchman is possessed of the natural character most desirable in the soldier. He is accustomed to fare hard, to take much exercise, to make many shifts, and to support with patience occasional deprivations. His happy gayety renders him indifferent to danger, his good-humour patient under hardship. His ingenuity seems to amuse as well as to assist him in the contingencies of a roving life. He can be with ease a cook or an artificer, or what else the occasion may require. His talents for actual war are not less decided. Either in advancing with spirit, or in retreating with order, the Frenchman is one of the finest soldiers in the world; and when requisite, the privates in their army often exhibit a degree of intelligence and knowledge of the profession, which might become individuals of a higher rank in other services. If not absolute water-drinkers, they are less addicted to intoxication than the English soldier, who, perhaps, only brings, to counterbalance the numerous advantages on the part of his opponent, that mastiff-like perseverance and determination in combat, which induces him to repeat, maintain, and prolong his efforts, under every disadvantage of numbers and circumstances.

The spirits of the Frenchman, such as we have described, did not suffer much from the violent summons which tore him from his home. We have, unhappily, in our own navy, an example, how little men's courage is broken by their being forced into a dangerous service. But comfortless as the state of France then was, and painful as the sights must have been by which the eyes were daily oppressed—closed up too as were the avenues to every civil walk of life, and cheap as they were held in a nation which had become all one vast camp, a youth of spirit was glad to escape from witnessing the desolation at home, and to take with gayety the chance of death or promotion, in the only line which might now be accounted comparatively safe, and indubitably honourable. The armies with whom these new levies were incorporated were by degrees admirably supplied with officers. The breaking down the old distinctions of ranks had opened a free career to those desirous of promotion; and in times of hard fighting, men of merit are distinguished and get preferment. The voice of the soldier had often its influence upon the officer's preferment; and that is a vote seldom bestowed, but from ocular proof that it is deserved. The revolutionary rulers, though bloody in their resentment, were liberal, almost extravagant, in their rewards, and spared neither gold nor steel, honours nor denunciations, to incite their generals to victory, or warn them against the consequences of defeat.

Under that stern rule which knew no excuse for ill success, and stimulated by opportunities which seemed to offer every prize to honourable ambition, arose a race of generals whom the world scarce ever saw equalled, and of whom there certainly never at any other period flourished so many, in the same service. Such was Buonaparte himself; such were Pichegru and Moreau, doomed to suffer a gloomy fate under his ascendancy. Such were those Marshals and Generals who were to share his better fortunes, and cluster around his future throne, as the Paladins around that of Charlemagne, or as the British and Armorican champions begirt the Round Table of Uther's fabled son. In those early wars, and summoned out by the stern conscription, were

trained Murat, whose eminence and fall seemed a corollary to that of his brother-in-law—Ney, the bravest of the brave—the calm, sagacious Macdonald—Joubert, who had almost anticipated the part reserved for Buonaparte—Massena, the spoiled Child of Fortune—Augereau, Berthier, Lannes, and many others, whose names began already to stir the French soldier as with the sound of a trumpet.

These adventurers in the race of fame belonged some of them, as Macdonald, to the old military school; some, like Moreau, came from the civil class of society; many arose from origins that were positively mean, and were therefore still more decidedly children of the Revolution. But that great earthquake, by throwing down distinctions of birth and rank, had removed obstacles which would otherwise have impeded the progress of almost all these distinguished men; and they were therefore, for the greater part, attached to that new order of affairs which afforded full scope to their talents.

The French armies, thus recruited, and thus commanded, were disciplined in a manner suitable to the materials of which they were composed. There was neither leisure nor opportunity to subject the new levies to all that minuteness of training, which was required by the somewhat pedantic formality of the old school of war. Dumouriez, setting the example, began to show that the principle of revolution might be introduced with advantage into the art of war itself; and that the difference betwixt these new conscripts and the veteran troops to whom they were opposed, might be much diminished by resorting to the original and more simple rules of stratagie, and neglecting many formalities which had been once considered as essential to playing the great game of war with success. It is the constant error of ordinary minds to consider matters of mere routine as equally important with those which are essential, and to entertain as much horror at a disordered uniform as at a confused manœuvre. It was to the honour of the French Generals, as men of genius, that in the hour of danger they were able to surmount all the prejudices of a profession which has its pedantry as well as others, and to suit the discipline which they retained to the character of their recruits and the urgency of the time.

The foppery of the manual exercise was laid aside, and it was restricted to the few motions necessary for effectual use of the musket and bayonet. Easier and more simple manœuvres were substituted for such as were involved and difficult to execute; and providing the line or column could be formed with activity, and that order was preserved on the march, the mere etiquette of military movements was much relaxed. The quantity of light troops was increased greatly beyond the number which had of late been used by European nations. The Austrians, who used to draw from the Tyrol, and from their wild Croatian frontier, the best light troops in the world, had at this time formed many of them into regiments of the line, and thus limited and diminished their own superiority in a species of force which was becoming of greater importance daily. The French, on the contrary, disciplined immense bodies of their conscripts as irregulars and sharp-shooters. Their numbers and galling fire frequently prevented their more systematic and formal adversaries from being able to push forward reconnoitring parties, by which to obtain any exact information as to the numbers and disposition of the French; while the Republican troops of the line, protected by this swarm of wasps, chose their time, place, and manner, of advancing to the attack, or retreating, as the case demanded. It is true, that this service cost an immense number of lives; but the French Generals were sensible that human life was the commodity which the Republic set the least value upon; and that when Death was served with so wide a feast from one end of France to the other, he was not to be stinted in his own proper banquetting-hall, the field of battle.

The same circumstances dictated another variety or innovation in French tactics, which greatly increased the extent of slaughter. The armies with whom they engaged, disconcerted by the great superiority of numbers which were opposed to them, and baffled in obtaining intelligence by the teasing activity of the French light troops, most frequently assumed the defensive, and taking a strong position, improved perhaps by field-works, waited until the fiery youth of France should come to throw themselves by thousands upon their batteries. It was then that the French generals began first to employ those successive attacks in column, in which one brigade of troops is brought up after another, without interruption, and without regard to the loss of lives, until the arms of the defenders are weary with slaying, and their line being in some point or other carried, through the impossibility of everywhere resisting an assault so continued and desperate, the battle is lost, and the army is compelled to give way; while the conquerors can, by the multitudes they have brought into action, afford to pay the dreadful price which they have given for the victory.

In this manner the French generals employed whole columns of the young conscripts, termed from that circumstance, "food for the cannon" (*chair à canon*), before disease had deprived them of bodily activity, or experience had taught them the dangers of the profession on which they entered with the thoughtless vivacity of schoolboys. It also frequently happened, even when the French possessed no numerical superiority upon the whole, that by the celerity of their movements, and the skill with which they at once combined and executed them, they were able suddenly to concentrate such a superiority upon the point which they meant to attack, as insured them the same advantage.

In enumerating the causes of the general success of the Republican arms, we must not forget the moral motive—the interest which the troops took in the cause of the war. The army, in fact, derived an instant and most flattering advantage from the Revolution, which could scarce be said of any other class of men in France, excepting the peasant. Their pay was improved, their importance increased. There was not a private soldier against whom the highest ranks of the profession was shut, and many attained to them. Massena was originally a drummer, Ney a common hussar, and there were many others who arose to the command of armies from the lowest condition. Now this was a government for a soldier to live and flourish under, and seemed still more advantageous when contrasted with the old monarchical system, in which the prejudices of birth interfered at every turn with the pretensions of merit, where a *roturier* could not rise above a subaltern rank, and where all offices of distinction were, as matters of inheritance, reserved for the *grande noblesse* alone.

But besides the rewards which it held out to its soldiers, the service of the Republic had this irresistible charm for the soldiery—it was victorious. The conquests which they obtained, and the plunder which attended those conquests, attached the victors to their standards, and drew around them fresh hosts of their countrymen. "*Vive la République!*" became a war-cry, as dear to their army as in former times the shout of Dennis Mountjoie, and the Tricoloured flag supplied the place of the Oriflamme. By the confusion, the oppression, the bloodshed of the Revolution, the soldiers were but little affected. They heard of friends imprisoned or guillotined, indeed;* but a military man, like a monk, leaves the concerns of the civil world behind him, and while he plays the bloody game for his own life or death with the enemy who faces him, has little time to think of what is happening in the native country which he

* Such was the fate of Moreau, who, on the eve of one of his most distinguished victories, had to receive the news that his father had been beheaded.

has abandoned. For any other acquaintance with the politics of the Republic, they were indebted to flowery speeches in the Convention, resounding with the praises of the troops, and to harangues of the representatives accompanying the armies, who never failed by flattery and largesses to retain possession of the affection of the soldiers, whose attachment was so essential to their safety. So well did they accomplish this, that while the Republic flourished, the armies were so much attached to that order of things, as to desert successively some of their most favourite leaders, when they became objects of suspicion to the fierce democracy.

The generals, indeed, had frequent and practical experience, that the Republic could be as severe with her military as with her civil subjects, and even more so, judging by the ruthlessness with which they were arrested and executed, with scarce the shadow of a pretext. Yet this did not diminish the zeal of the survivors. If the revolutionary government beheaded, they also paid, promised, and promoted; and amid the various risks of a soldier's life, the hazard of the guillotine was only a slight addition to those of the sword and the musket,* which, in the sanguine eye of courage and ambition, joined to each individual's confidence in his own good luck, did not seem to render his chance much worse. When such punishment arrived, the generals submitted to it as one of the casualties of war; nor was the Republic worse or more reluctantly served by those who were left.

Such being the admirable quality and talents, the mode of thinking and acting, which the Republican, or rather Revolutionary, armies possessed, it required only the ruling genius of the celebrated Carnot, who, bred in the department of engineers, was probably one of the very best tacticians in the world, to bring them into effectual use. He was a member of the frightful Committee of Public Safety; but it has been said in his defence, that he did not meddle with its atrocities, limiting himself entirely to the war department, for which he showed so much talent, that his colleagues left it to his exclusive management. In his own individual person he constituted the whole *bureau militaire*, or war-office, of the Committee of Public Safety, corresponded with and directed the movements of the armies, as if inspired by the Goddess of Victory herself. He first daringly claimed for France her natural boundaries (that is, the boundaries most convenient for her). The Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, he assigned as the limits of her dominions; and asserted that all within these, belonging to other powers, must have been usurpations on France, and were unhesitatingly to be resumed as such. And he conquered by his genius the countries which his ambition claimed. Belgium became an integral part of the French Republic—Holland was erected into a little dependent democracy, as an outwork for defending the Great Nation—the Austrians were foiled on the Rhine—the King of Sardinia driven from Savoy—and schemes realized which Louis XIV. never dared to dream of. In return for the complaisance exhibited by the Committee towards himself, he did not express any scruples, if he entertained such, concerning the mode in which they governed the interior of their unhappy country. Yet notwithstanding his skill and his caution, the blighting eye of Robespierre was fixed on him, as that of the snake which watches its victim. He could not dispense with the talents of Carnot in the career of victory; but it is well known, that

* The risk was considered as a matter of course. Madame La Roche-Jacquelein informs us that General Quétineau, a Republican officer who had behaved with great humanity in La Vendée, having fallen into the hands of the insurgents, was pressed by L'Écure, who commanded them, not to return to Paris. "I know the difference of our political opinions," said the Royalist; "but why should you deliver up your life to those men with whom want of success will be a sufficient reason for abridging it?"—"You say truly," replied Quétineau; "but as a man of honour, I must present myself in defence of my conduct wherever it may be impeached." He went, and perished by the guillotine accordingly.

if his plans on any occasion had miscarried, the security of his head would have become very precarious.

It must also be allowed, that although the French armies were attached to the Republic, and moved usually under direction of a member of the Committee of Public Security, they did not adopt, in their brutal extent, the orders for exterminating warfare which were transmitted to them by their masters. At one time a decree was passed, refusing quarter to such of the allied troops as might be made prisoners; but the French soldiers could not be prevailed on to take a step which must have aggravated so dreadfully the necessary horrors of war. When we consider how the civil government of France were employed, when the soldiers refused their sanction to this decree, it seems as if Humanity had fled from cities and the peaceful dwellings of men, to seek a home in camps and combats.

One important part of the subject can be here treated but slightly. We allude to the great advantages derived by the French arms from the reception of their political doctrines at this period among the people whom they invaded. They proclaimed aloud that they made war on castles and palaces, but were at peace with cottages; and as on some occasions besieging generals are said to have bribed the governor of a place to surrender it, by promising they would leave in his unchallenged possession the military chest of the garrison, so the French in all cases held out to the populace the plunder of their own nobles, as an inducement for them to favour, at least not to oppose, the invasion of their country. Thus their armies were always preceded by their principles. A party favourable to France, and listening with delight to the doctrines of liberty and equality, was formed in the bosom of each neighbouring state, so that the power of the invaded nation was crushed, and its spirit quenched, under a sense of internal discontent and discord. The French were often received at once as conquerors and deliverers by the countries they invaded; and in almost all cases, the governments on which they made war were obliged to trust exclusively to such regular forces as they could bring into the field, being deprived of the inappreciable advantage of general zeal among their subjects in their behalf. It was not long ere the inhabitants of those deceived countries found that the fruits of the misnamed tree of Liberty resembled those said to grow by the Dead Sea—fair and goodly to the eye, but to the taste all filth and bitterness.

We are now to close our review of the French Revolution, the fall of Robespierre being the era at which its terrors began to ebb and recede, nor did they ever again arise to the same height. If we look back at the whole progress of the change, from the convocation of the States-General to the 9th Thermidor, as the era of that man's overthrow was called, the eye in vain seeks for any point at which even a probability existed of establishing a solid or permanent government. The three successive constitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1794, the successive work of Constitutionals, Girondists, and Jacobins, possessed no more power to limit or arrest the force of the revolutionary impulse, than a bramble or briar to stop the progress of a rock rushing down from a precipice. Though ratified and sworn to, with every circumstance which could add solemnity to the obligation, each remained, in succession, a dead letter. France, in 1794 and 1795, was therefore a nation without either a regular constitution, or a regular administration; governed by the remnant of an Assembly called a Convention, who continued sitting, merely because the crisis found them in possession of their seats, and who administered the government through the medium of Provisional Committees, with whose dictates they complied implicitly, and who really directed all things, though in the Convention's name.

In the meantime, and since those strange scenes had commenced, France

had lost her King and Nobles, her Church and Clergy, her Judges, Courts, and Magistrates, her Colonies and Commerce. The greater part of her statesmen and men of note had perished by proscription, and her orators' eloquence had been cut short by the guillotine. She had no finances—the bonds of civil society seem to have retained their influence from habit only. The nation possessed only one powerful engine, which France called her own, and one impulsive power to guide it—These were her army and her ambition. She resembled a person in the delirium of a fever, who has stripped himself in his frenzy of all decent and necessary clothing, and retains in his hand only a bloody sword; while those who have endeavoured to check his fury, lie subdued around him. Never had so many great events successively taken place in a nation, without affording something like a fixed or determined result, either already attained, or soon to be expected.

Again and again did reflecting men say to each other,—This unheard-of state of things, in which all seems to be temporary and revolutionary, will not, cannot last;—and especially after the fall of Robespierre, it seemed that some change was approaching. Those who had achieved that work, did not hold on any terms of security the temporary power which it had procured them. They rather retained their influence by means of the jealousy of two extreme parties, than from any confidence reposed in themselves. Those who had suffered so deeply under the rule of the revolutionary government, must have looked with suspicion on the Thermidoriens as regular Jacobins, who had shared all the excesses of the period of Terror, and now employed their power in protecting the perpetrators. On the other hand, those of the Revolutionists who yet continued in the bond of Jacobin fraternity, could not forgive Tallien and Barras the silencing the Jacobin Clubs, the exiling Collot d'Herbois and Billaud Varennes, putting to death many other patriots, and totally crushing the system of revolutionary government. In fact, if the thorough-bred Revolutionists still endured the domination of Tallien and Barras, it was only because it shielded them from the reaction, or retributive measures threatened by the moderate party. Matters, it was thought, could not remain in this uncertain state, nor was the present temporary pageant of government likely to linger long on the scene. But by whom was that scene next to be opened? Would a late returning to ancient opinions induce a people, who had suffered so much through innovation, to recall either absolutely, or upon conditions, the banished race of her ancient Princes? Or would a new band of Revolutionists be permitted by Heaven, in its continued vengeance, to rush upon the stage? Would the supreme power become the prize of some soldier as daring as Cæsar, or some intriguing statesman as artful as Octavius? Would France succumb beneath a Cromwell or a Monk, or again be ruled by a Cabal of hackneyed statesmen, or an Institute of Theoretical Philosophy, or an anarchical Club of Jacobins? These were reflections which occupied almost all bosoms. But the hand of Fate was on the curtain, and about to bring the scene to light.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Corsica.—Family of Buonaparte.—Napoleon born 15th August 1769—His early Habits—Sent to the Royal Military School at Brienne—His great Progress in Mathematical Science—Deficiency in Classical Literature.—Anecdotes of him while at School—Removed to the General School of Paris.—When seventeen Years Old, appointed 2d Lieutenant of Artillery—His early Politics—Promoted to a Captaincy.—Pascal Paoli.—Napoleon sides with the French Government against Paoli—Along with his Brother Lucien, he is banished from Corsica—Never revisits it—Always unpopular there.

THE Island of Corsica was, in ancient times, remarkable as the scene of Seneca's exile, and in the last century was distinguished by the memorable stand which the natives made in defence of their liberties against the Genoese and French, during a war which tended to shew the high and indomitable spirit of the islanders, united as it is with the fiery and vindictive feelings proper to their country and climate.

In this island, which was destined to derive its future importance chiefly from the circumstance, NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE, or BONAPARTE,* had his origin. His family was noble, though not of much distinction, and rather reduced in fortune. Flattery afterwards endeavoured to trace the name which he had made famous, into remote ages, and researches were made through ancient records, to discover that there was one Buonaparte who had written a book, another who had signed a treaty—a female of the name who had given birth to a pope, with other minute claims of distinction, which Napoleon justly considered as trivial, and unworthy of notice. He answered the Emperor of Austria, who had a fancy of tracing his son-in-law's descent from one of the petty sovereigns of Treviso, that he was the Rodolph of Hapsbourg of his family; and to a genealogist, who made a merit of deducing his descent from some ancient line of Gothic princes, he caused reply to be made, that he dated his patent of nobility from the battle of Monte Notte, that is, from his first victory.

All that is known with certainty of Napoleon's family may be told in few words. The Buonapartes were a family of some distinction in the middle ages; their names are inscribed in the Golden Book at Treviso, and their armorial bearings are to be seen on several houses in Florence. But attached, during the civil war, to the party of the Ghibellines, they of course were persecuted by the Guelphs; and being exiled from Tuscany, one of the family took refuge in Corsica, and there established himself and his successors, who were regularly enrolled among the noble natives of the island, and enjoyed all the privileges of gentle blood.

The father of Napoleon, Charles Buonaparte, was the principal descendant of this exiled family. He was regularly educated at Pisa, to the study of the law, and is stated to have possessed a very handsome person, a talent for eloquence, and a vivacity of intellect, which he transmitted to his son. He was a patriot also and a soldier, and assisted at the gallant stand made by Paoli against

* There was an absurd debate about the spelling of the name, which became, as trifles often do, a sort of party question. Buonaparte had disused the superfluous *u*, which his father retained in the name, and adopted a more modern spelling. This was represented on one side as an attempt to bring his name more nearly to the French idiom; and, as if it had been a matter of the last moment, the vowel was obstinately replaced in the name, by a class of writers who deemed it politic not to permit the successful General to relinquish the slightest mark of his Italian extraction, which was in every respect impossible for him either to conceal or to deny, even if he had nourished such an idea. In his baptismal register, his name is spelled Napoleon Bonaparte, though the father subscribes, Carlo Buonaparte. The spelling seems to have been quite indifferent.

the French. It is said he would have emigrated along with Paoli, who was his friend, and, it is believed, his kinsman, but was withheld by the influence of his father's brother, Lucien Buonaparte, who was Archdeacon of the Cathedral of Ajaccio, and the wealthiest person of the family.

It was in the middle of civil discord, fights and skirmishes, that Charles Buonaparte married Lætitia Ramolini, one of the most beautiful young women of the island, and possessed of a great deal of firmness of character. She partook the dangers of her husband during the years of civil war, and is said to have accompanied him on horseback in some military expeditions, or perhaps hasty flights, shortly before her being delivered of the future Emperor. Though left a widow in the prime of life, she had already borne her husband thirteen children, of whom five sons and three daughters survived him. I. Joseph, the eldest, who, though placed by his brother in an obnoxious situation, as intrusive King of Spain, held the reputation of a good and moderate man. II. Napoleon himself. III. Lucien, scarce inferior to his brother in ambition and talent. IV. Louis, the merit of whose character consists in its unpretending worth, and who renounced a crown rather than consent to the oppression of his subjects. V. Jerome, whose disposition is said to have been chiefly marked by a tendency to dissipation. The females were, I. Maria Anne, afterwards Grand Duchess of Tuscany, by the name of Elisa. II. Maria Annonciada, who became Maria Pauline, Princess of Borghese. III. Carlotta, or Caroline, wife of Murat, and Queen of Naples.

The family of Buonaparte being reconciled to the French government after the emigration of Paoli, enjoyed the protection of the Count de Marbœuf, the French Governor of Corsica, by whose interest Charles was included in a deputation of the nobles of the island, sent to Louis XV. in 1776. As a consequence of this mission, he was appointed to a judicial situation, that of assessor of the tribunal of Ajaccio, the income of which aided him to maintain his increasing family, which the smallness of his patrimony, and some habits of expense, would otherwise have rendered difficult. Charles Buonaparte, the father of Napoleon, died at the age of about forty years, of an ulcer in the stomach, on the 24th February 1785. His celebrated son fell a victim to the same disease. During Napoleon's grandeur, the community of Montpellier expressed a desire to erect a monument to the memory of Charles Buonaparte. His answer was both sensible and in good taste. "Had I lost my father yesterday," he said, "it would be natural to pay his memory some mark of respect consistent with my present situation. But it is twenty years since the event, and it is one in which the public can take no concern. Let us leave the dead in peace."

The subject of our narrative was born, according to the best accounts, and his own belief, upon the 15th day of August 1769, at his father's house in Ajaccio, forming one side of a court which leads out of the Rue Charles.* We read with interest, that his mother's good constitution, and bold character of mind, having induced her to attend mass upon the day of his birth, (being the Festival of the Assumption,) she was obliged to return home immediately, and as there was no time to prepare a bed or bedroom, she was delivered of the future victor upon a temporary couch prepared for her accommodation, and covered with an ancient piece of tapestry, representing the heroes of the Iliad. The infant was christened by the name of Napoleon, an obscure saint, who had dropped to leeward, and fallen altogether out of the calendar, so that his namesake never knew which day he was to celebrate as the festival of his patron. When questioned on this subject by the bishop who confirmed him, he answered smartly, that there were a great many saints, and only three hundred and sixty-five days to divide amongst them. The politeness of the Pope promoted the

* Benson's Sketches of Corsica, p. 4.

patron in order to compliment the godchild, and Saint Napoleon des Ursins was accommodated with a festival. To render this compliment, which no one but a Pope could have paid, still more flattering, the feast of Saint Napoleon was fixed for the fifteenth August, the birth-day of the Emperor, and the day on which he signed the Concordat. So that Napoleon had the rare honour of promoting his patron saint.

The young Napoleon had, of course, the simple and hardy education proper to the natives of the mountainous island of his birth, and in his infancy was not remarkable for more than that animation of temper, and wilfulness and impatience of inactivity, by which children of quick parts and lively sensibility are usually distinguished. The winter of the year was generally passed by the family of his father at Ajaccio, where they still preserve and exhibit, as the ominous plaything of Napoleon's boyhood, the model of a brass cannon, weighing about thirty pounds.* We leave it to philosophers to inquire, whether the future love of war was suggested by the accidental possession of such a toy; or whether the tendency of the mind dictated the selection of it; or, lastly, whether the nature of the pastime, corresponding with the taste which chose it, may not have had each their action and reaction, and contributed between them to the formation of a character so warlike.

The same traveller who furnishes the above anecdote, gives an interesting account of the country retreat of the family of Buonaparte, during the summer.

Going along the sea-shore from Ajaccio towards the Isle Sanguiniere, about a mile from the town, occur two stone pillars, the remains of a door-way, leading up to a dilapidated villa, once the residence of Madame Buonaparte's half-brother on the mother's side, whom Napoleon created Cardinal Fesch.† The house is approached by an avenue, surrounded and overhung by the cactus and other shrubs, which luxuriate in a warm climate. It has a garden and a lawn, showing amidst neglect vestiges of their former beauty, and the house is surrounded by shrubberies, permitted to run to wilderness. This was the summer residence of Madame Buonaparte and her family. Almost inclosed by the wild olive, the cactus, the clematis, and the almond-tree, is a very singular and isolated granite rock, called Napoleon's grotto, which seems to have resisted the decomposition which has taken place around. The remains of a small summer-house are visible beneath the rock, the entrance to which is nearly closed by a luxuriant fig-tree. This was Buonaparte's frequent retreat, when the vacations of the school at which he studied permitted him to visit home.—How the imagination labours to form an idea of the visions, which, in this sequestered and romantic spot, must have arisen before the eyes of the future hero of a hundred battles!

The Count de Marbœuf, already mentioned as Governor of Corsica, interested himself in the young Napoleon, so much as to obtain him an appointment to the Royal Military School at Brienne, which was maintained at the royal expense, in order to bring up youths for the engineer and artillery service. The malignity of contemporary historians has ascribed a motive of gallantry towards Madame Buonaparte as the foundation of this kindness; but Count Marbœuf had arrived at a period of life when such connexions are not to be presumed, nor did the scandal receive any currency from the natives of Ajaccio.

Nothing could be more suitable to the nature of young Buonaparte's genius, than the line of study which thus fortunately was opened before him. His ardour for the abstract sciences amounted to a passion, and was combined with a singular aptitude for applying them to the purposes of war, while his attention to pursuits so interesting and exhaustless in themselves, was stimulated by his

* Sketches of Corsica, p. 4.

† The mother of Letitia Ramolini, wife of Carlo Buonaparte, married a Swiss officer in the French service, named Fesch, after the death of Letitia's father.

natural ambition and desire of distinction. Almost all the scientific teachers at Brienne, being accustomed to study the character of their pupils, and obliged by their duty to make memoranda and occasional reports on the subject, spoke of the talents of Buonaparte, and the progress of his studies, with admiration. Circumstances of various kinds, exaggerated or invented, have been circulated concerning the youth of a person so remarkable. The following are given upon good authority.*

The conduct of Napoleon among his companions, was that of a studious and reserved youth, addicting himself deeply to the means of improvement, and rather avoiding than seeking the usual temptations to dissipation of time. He had few friends, and no intimates; yet at different times, when he chose to exert it, he exhibited considerable influence over his fellow-students, and when there was any joint plan to be carried into effect, he was frequently chosen Dictator of the little republic.

In the time of winter, Buonaparte upon one occasion engaged his companions in constructing a fortress out of the snow, regularly defended by ditches and bastions, according to the rules of fortification. It was considered as displaying the great powers of the juvenile engineer in the way of his profession, and was attacked and defended by the students, who divided into parties for the purpose, until the battle became so keen that their superiors thought it proper to proclaim a truce.

The young Buonaparte gave another instance of address and enterprise upon the following occasion. There was a fair held annually in the neighbourhood of Brienne, where the pupils of the Military School used to find a day's amusement; but on account of a quarrel betwixt them and the country people upon a former occasion, or for some such cause, the masters of the Institution had directed that the students should not on the fair-day be permitted to go beyond their own precincts, which were surrounded with a wall. Under the direction of the young Corsican, however, the scholars had already laid a plot for securing their usual day's diversion. They had undermined the wall which encompassed their exercising ground, with so much skill and secrecy, that their operations remained entirely unknown till the morning of the fair, when a part of the boundary unexpectedly fell, and gave a free passage to the imprisoned students, of which they immediately took the advantage, by hurrying to the prohibited scene of amusement.

But although on these, and perhaps other occasions, Buonaparte displayed some of the frolic temper of youth, mixed with the inventive genius and the talent for commanding others by which he was distinguished in after time, his life at school was in general that of a recluse and severe student, acquiring by his judgment, and treasuring in his memory, that wonderful process of almost unlimited combination, by means of which he was afterwards able to simplify the most difficult and complicated undertakings. His mathematical teacher was proud of the young islander, as the boast of his school. and his other scientific instructors had the same reason to be satisfied.

In languages Buonaparte was less a proficient, and never acquired the art of writing or spelling French, far less foreign languages, with accuracy or correctness; nor had the monks of Brienne any reason to pride themselves on the classical proficiency of their scholar. The full energies of his mind being devoted to the scientific pursuits of his profession, left little time or inclination for other studies.

Though of Italian origin, Buonaparte had not a decided taste for the fine arts, and his taste in composition seems to have leaned towards the grotesque

* They were many years since communicated to the author by Messrs. Joseph and Louis Law, brothers of General Baron Lauriston, Buonaparte's favourite aid-de-camp. These gentlemen, or at least Joseph, were educated at Brienne, but at a later period than Napoleon. Their distinguished brother was his contemporary.

and the bombastic. He used always the most exaggerated phrases; and it is seldom, if ever, that his bulletins present those touches of sublimity which are founded on dignity and simplicity of expression.

Notwithstanding the external calmness and reserve of his deportment, he who was destined for such great things, had, while yet a student at Brienne, a full share of that ambition for distinction and dread of disgrace, that restless and irritating love of fame, which is the spur to extraordinary attempts. Sparkles of this keen temper sometimes showed themselves. On one occasion, a harsh superintendant imposed on the future Emperor, for some trifling fault, the disgrace of wearing a penitential dress, and being excluded from the table of the students, and obliged to eat his meal apart. His pride felt the indignity so severely, that it brought on a severe nervous attack; to which, though otherwise of good constitution, he was subject upon occasions of extraordinary irritation. Father Petrault, the Professor of Mathematics, hastened to deliver his favourite pupil from the punishment by which he was so much affected.

It is also said that an early disposition to the popular side distinguished Buonaparte even when at Brienne. Pichegru, afterwards so celebrated, who acted as his monitor in the military school, (a singular circumstance,) bore witness to his early principles, and to the peculiar energy and tenacity of his temper. He was long afterwards consulted whether means might not be found to engage the commander of the Italian armies in the royal interest. "It will be but lost time to attempt it," said Pichegru. "I knew him in his youth—his character is inflexible—he has taken his side, and he will not change it."

In 1783, Napoleon Buonaparte, then only fourteen years old, was, though under the usual age, selected by Monsieur de Keralio, the inspector of the twelve military schools, to be sent to have his education completed in the general school of Paris. It was a compliment paid to the precocity of his extraordinary mathematical talent, and the steadiness of his application. While at Paris he attracted the same notice as at Brienne; and among other society, frequented that of the celebrated Abbé Raynal, and was admitted to his literary parties. His taste did not become correct, but his appetite for study in all departments was greatly enlarged; and notwithstanding the quantity which he daily read, his memory was strong enough to retain, and his judgment sufficiently ripe to arrange and digest, the knowledge which he then acquired; so that he had it at his command during all the rest of his busy life. Plutarch was his favourite author; upon the study of whom he had so modelled his opinions and habits of thought, that Paoli afterwards pronounced him a young man of an antique caste, and resembling one of the classical heroes.

Some of his biographers have about this time ascribed to him the anecdote of a certain youthful pupil of the military school, who desired to ascend in the car of a balloon with the aeronaut Blanchard, and was so mortified at being refused, that he made an attempt to cut the balloon with his sword. The story has but a flimsy support, and indeed does not accord well with the character of the hero, which was deep and reflective, as well as bold and determined, and not likely to suffer its energies to escape in idle and useless adventure.

A better authenticated anecdote states, that at this time he expressed himself disrespectfully towards the King in one of his letters to his family. According to the practice of the school, he was obliged to submit the letter to the censorship of Monsieur Domairon, the Professor of Belles Lettres, who, taking notice of the offensive passage, insisted upon the letter being burnt, and added a severe rebuke. Long afterwards, in 1802, Monsieur Domairon was commanded to attend Napoleon's levee, in order that he might receive a pupil in the person of Jerome Buonaparte; when the First Consul reminded his old tutor good-humouredly, that times had changed considerably since the burning of the letter.

Napoleon Buonaparte, in his seventeenth year, received his first commission as second lieutenant in a regiment of artillery, and was almost immediately

afterwards promoted to the rank of first lieutenant in the corps quartered at Valance. He mingled with society when he joined his regiment, more than he had hitherto been accustomed to do; mixed in public amusements, and exhibited the powers of pleasing which he possessed in an uncommon degree, when he chose to exert them. His handsome and intelligent features, with his active and neat, though slight figure, gave him additional advantages. His manners could scarcely be called elegant, but made up in vivacity and variety of expression, and often in great spirit and energy, for what they wanted in grace and polish.

He became an adventurer for the honours of literature also, and was anonymously a competitor for the prize offered by the Academy of Lyons on Raynal's question, "What are the principles and institutions, by application of which mankind can be raised to the highest pitch of happiness?" The prize was adjudged to the young soldier. It is impossible to avoid feeling curiosity to know the character of the juvenile theories respecting government, advocated by one who at length attained the power of practically making what experiments he pleased. Probably his early ideas did not exactly coincide with his more mature practice; for when Talleyrand, many years afterwards, got the Essay out of the records of the Academy, and returned it to the author, Buonaparte destroyed it after he had read a few pages. He also laboured under the temptation of writing a journey to Mount Cenis, after the manner of Sterne, which he was fortunate enough finally to resist. The affectation which pervades Sterne's peculiar style of composition, was not likely to be simplified under the pen of Buonaparte.

Sternian times were fast approaching, and the nation was now fully divided by those factions which produced the Revolution. The officers of Buonaparte's regiment were also divided into Royalists and Patriots; and it is easily to be imagined, that the young and friendless stranger and adventurer should adopt that side to which he had already shown some inclination, and which promised to open the most free career to those who had only their merit to rely upon. "Were I general officer," he is alleged to have said, "I would have adhered to the King; being a subaltern, I join the Patriots."

There was a story current, that in a debate with some brother officers on the politics of the time, Buonaparte expressed himself so outrageously, that they were provoked to throw him into the Rhone, where he had nearly perished. But this is an inaccurate account of the accident which actually befell him. He was seized with the cramp when bathing in the river. His comrades saved him with difficulty, but his danger was matter of pure chance.

Napoleon has himself recorded that he was a warm patriot during the whole sitting of the National Assembly; but that on the appointment of the Legislative Assembly, he became shaken in his opinions. If so, his original sentiments regained force; for we shortly afterwards find him entertaining such as went to the extreme heights of the Revolution.

Early in the year 1792, Buonaparte became a captain in the artillery by seniority; and in the same year, being at Paris, he witnessed the two insurrections of the 21st June and 10th August. He was accustomed to speak of the insurgents as the most despicable banditti, and to express with what ease a determined officer could have checked these apparently formidable, but dastardly and unwieldy masses. But with what a different feeling of interest would Napoleon have looked on that infuriated populace, those still resisting though overpowered Swiss, and that burning palace, had any seer whispered to him, "Emperor that shall be, all this blood and massacre is but to prepare your future empire!" Little anticipating the potent effect which the passing events were to bear on his own fortune, Buonaparte, anxious for the safety of his mother and family, was now desirous to exchange France for Corsica, where the same things were acting on a less distinguished stage.

It was a singular feature in the French Revolution, that it brought out from his retirement the celebrated Pascal Paoli, who, long banished from Corsica, the freedom and independence of which he had so valiantly defended, returned from exile with the flattering hope of still witnessing the progress of liberty in his native land. On visiting Paris, he was received there with enthusiastic veneration, and the National Assembly and Royal Family contended which should show him most distinction. He was created President of the Department, and Commander of the National Guard of his native island, and used the powers intrusted to him with great wisdom and patriotism.

But Paoli's views of liberty were different from those which unhappily began to be popular in France. He was desirous of establishing that freedom, which is the protector, not the destroyer of property, and which confers practical happiness, instead of aiming at theoretical perfection. In a word, he endeavoured to keep Corsica free from the prevailing infection of Jacobinism; and in reward, he was denounced in the Assembly. Paoli, summoned to attend for the purpose of standing on his defence, declined the journey on account of his age, but offered to withdraw from the island.

A large proportion of the inhabitants took part with the aged champion of their freedom, while the Convention sent an expedition, at the head of which were La Combe, Saint Michel, and Salicetti, one of the Corsican deputies to the Convention, with the usual instructions for bloodshed and pillage issued to their commissaries.

Buonaparte was in Corsica, upon leave of absence from his regiment, when these events were taking place; and although he himself, and Paoli, had hitherto been on friendly terms, and some family relations existed between them, the young artillery officer did not hesitate which side to choose. He embraced that of the Convention with heart and hand; and his first military exploit was in the civil war of his native island. In the year 1793, he was despatched from Bastia, in possession of the French party, to surprise his native town Ajaccio, then occupied by Paoli or his adherents. Buonaparte was acting provisionally, as commanding a battalion of National Guards. He landed in the Gulf of Ajaccio with about fifty men, to take possession of a tower called the Torre di Capitello, on the opposite side of the gulf, and almost facing the city. He succeeded in taking the place; but as there arose a gale of wind which prevented his communicating with the frigate which had put him ashore, he was besieged in his new conquest by the opposite faction, and reduced to such distress, that he and his little garrison were obliged to feed on horse-flesh. After five days he was relieved by the frigate, and evacuated the tower, having first in vain attempted to blow it up. The Torre di Capitello still shows marks of the damage it then sustained, and its remains may be looked on as a curiosity, as the first scene of his combats, before whom

———"Temple and tower
Went to the ground——"*

A relation of Napoleon, Masserio by name, effectually defended Ajaccio against the force employed in the expedition.

The strength of Paoli increasing, and the English preparing to assist him, Corsica became no longer a safe or convenient residence for the Buonaparte family. Indeed, both Napoleon and his brother Lucien, who had distinguished

* Such is the report of the Corsicans, concerning the alleged first exploit of their celebrated countryman. See Benson's Sketches, p. 4. But there is room to believe that Buonaparte had been in action so early as February 1793. Admiral Truguet, with a strong fleet, and having on board a large body of troops, had been at anchor for several weeks in the Corsican harbours, announcing a descent upon Sardinia. At length, having received on board an additional number of forces, he set sail on his expedition. Buonaparte is supposed to have accompanied the Admiral, of whose talent and judgment he is made in the Saint Helena MSS. to speak with great contempt. Buonaparte succeeded in taking some batteries in the straits of Saint Bonifacio; but the expedition proving unsuccessful, they were speedily abandoned.

themselves as partisans of the French, were subjected to a decree of banishment from their native island; and Madame Buonaparte, with her three daughters, and Jerome, who was as yet but a child, set sail under their protection, and settled for a time, first at Nice, and afterwards at Marseilles, where the family is supposed to have undergone considerable distress, until the dawning prospects of Napoleon afforded him the means of assisting them.

Napoleon never again revisited Corsica, nor does he appear to have regarded it with any feelings of affection. One small fountain at Ajaccio is pointed out as the only ornament which his bounty bestowed on his birth-place. He might perhaps think it impolitic to do anything which might remind the country he ruled that he was not a child of her soil, nay, was in fact very near having been born an alien, for Corsica was not united to, or made an integral part of France, until June 1769, a few weeks only before Napoleon's birth. This stigma was repeatedly cast upon him by his opponents, some of whom reproached the French with having adopted a master, from a country from which the ancient Romans were unwilling even to choose a slave; and Napoleon may have been so far sensible to it, as to avoid showing any predilection to the place of his birth, which might bring the circumstance strongly under observation of the great nation, with which he and his family seemed to be indissolubly united. But, as a traveller already quoted, and who had the best opportunities to become acquainted with the feelings of the proud islanders, has expressed it,—“The Corsicans are still highly patriotic, and possess strong local attachment—in their opinion, contempt for the country of one's birth is never to be redeemed by any other qualities. Napoleon, therefore, certainly was not popular in Corsica, nor is his memory cherished there.”*

The feelings of the parties were not unnatural on either side. Napoleon, little interested in the land of his birth, and having such an immense stake in that of his adoption, in which he had everything to keep and lose,† observed a policy towards Corsica which his position rendered advisable; and who can blame the high-spirited islanders, who, seeing one of their countrymen raised to such exalted eminence, and disposed to forget his connexion with them, returned with slight and indifference the disregard with which he treated them?

* Benson's Sketches of Corsica, p. 121.

† Not literally, however; for it is worth mentioning, that when he was in full-blown possession of his power, an inheritance fell to the family situated near Ajaccio, and was divided amongst them. The first Consul, or Emperor, received an olive garden as his share.—*Sketches of Corsica.*

CHAPTER XIX.

Siege of Toulon.—Recapitulation.—Buonaparte appointed Brigadier-General of Artillery, with the Command of the Artillery at Toulon—Finds everything in disorder—His Plan for obtaining the Surrender of the Place—Adopted.—Anecdotes during the Siege.—Allied Troops resolve to evacuate Toulon—Dreadful Particulars of the Evacuation—England censured on this occasion.—Lord Lynedoch.—Fame of Buonaparte increases, and he is appointed Chief of Battalion in the Army of Italy—Joins Head-quarters at Nice.—On the Fall of Robespierre, Buonaparte superseded in command—Arrives in Paris in May 1795 to solicit employment—He is unsuccessful.—Talma.—Retrospect of the Proceedings of the National Assembly.—Difficulties in forming a new Constitution.—Appointment of the Directory—of the Two Councils of Elders and of Five Hundred.—Nation at large, and Paris in particular, disgusted with their pretensions.—Paris assembles in Sections.—General Danican appointed their Commander-in-Chief.—Menou appointed by the Directory to disarm the National Guards—but suspended for incapacity—Buonaparte appointed in his room.—The Day of the Sections.—Conflict betwixt the Troops of the Convention under Buonaparte, and those of the Sections of Paris under Danican.—The latter defeated with much slaughter.—Buonaparte appointed Second in Command of the Army of the Interior—then General in Chief—Marries Madame Beauharnois—Her Character.—Buonaparte immediately afterwards joins the Army of Italy.

THE siege of Toulon was the first incident of importance, which enabled Buonaparte to distinguish himself in the eyes of the French government, and of the world at large.

We have already mentioned that a general diffidence, and dread of the proceedings of the Jacobins, joined to the intrigues of the Girondists, had, after the fall of the latter party, induced several of the principal towns in France to take arms against the Convention, or rather against the Jacobin party, who had attained the complete mastery in that body. We have also said that Toulon, taking a more decided step than either Marseilles or Lyons, had declared for the King and the Constitution of 1789, and invited the support of the English and Spanish squadrons, who were cruising upon the coast. A disembarkation was made, and a miscellaneous force hastily collected, of Spaniards, Sardinians, Neapolitans, and English, was thrown into the place.

This was one of the critical periods when vigorous measures, on the part of the allies, might have produced marked effects on the result of the war. Toulon is the arsenal of France, and contained at that time immense naval stores, besides a fleet of seventeen sail of the line ready for sea, and thirteen or fourteen more, which stood in need of refitting. The possession of it was of the last importance, and with a sufficiently large garrison, or rather an army strong enough to cover the more exposed points without the town, the English might have maintained their footing at Toulon, as they did at a later period both at Lisbon and Cadiz. The sea would, by maintaining the defensive lines necessary to protect the roadstead, have been entirely at the command of the besieged; and they could have been supplied with provisions in any quantity from Sicily, or the Barbary States, while the besiegers would have experienced great difficulty, such was the dearth in Provence at the time, in supporting their own army. But to have played this bold game, the presence of an army, instead of a few battalions, would have been requisite; and a general of consummate ability must have held the chief command. This was the more especially necessary, as Toulon, from the nature of the place, must have been defended by a

war of posts, requiring peculiar alertness, sagacity, and vigilance. On the other hand, there were circumstances very favourable for the defence, had it been conducted with talent and vigour. In order to invest Toulon on the right and left side at once, it was necessary there should be two distinct blockading armies; and these could scarce communicate with each other, as a steep ridge of mountains, called Pharon, must interpose betwixt them. This gave opportunity to the besieged to combine their force, and choose the object of attack when they sallied; while, on the other hand, the two bodies of besiegers could not easily connect their operations, either for attack or defence.

Lord Mulgrave, who commanded personally in the place, notwithstanding the motley character of the garrison, and other discouraging circumstances, began the defence with spirit. Sir George Keith Elphinstone also defeated the Republicans at the mountain-pass, called Ollioulles. The English for some time retained possession of this important gorge, but were finally driven out from it. Cartaux, a republican general whom we have already mentioned, now advanced on the west of Toulon, at the head of a very considerable army, while General Lapoype blockaded the city on the east, with a part of the army of Italy. It was the object of the French to approach Toulon on both sides of the mountainous ridge called Pharon. But on the east the town was covered by the strong and regular fort of La Malgue, and on the west side of the road by a less formidable work, called Malbosquet. To support Malbosquet, and to protect the entrance to the roadstead and the harbour, the English engineers fortified with great skill an eminence, called Hauteur de Grasse. The height bent into a sort of bay, the two promontories of which were secured by redoubts, named L'Eguillotte and Balagniere, which communicated with and supported the new fortification, which the English had termed Fort Mulgrave.

Several sallies and skirmishes took place, in most of which the Republicans were worsted. Lieutenant-General O'Hara arrived from Gibraltar with reinforcements, and assumed the chief command.

Little could be said for the union of the commanders within Toulon; yet their enterprises were so far successful, that the French began to be alarmed at the slow progress of the siege. The dearth of provisions was daily increasing, the discontent of the people of Provence was augmented; the Catholics were numerous in the neighbouring districts of Vivarais and Lower Languedoc; and Barras and Freron wrote from Marseilles to the Convention, suggesting that the siege of Toulon should be raised,* and the besieging army withdrawn beyond the Durance. But while weaker minds were despairing, talents of the first order were preparing to achieve the conquest of Toulon.

Buonaparte, since his return from Corsica, seems to have enjoyed some protection from his countryman Sallicetti, the only one of the Corsican deputies who voted for the King's death, and a person to whom the young artillery officer had been known during the civil war of his native island. Napoleon had shown that his own opinions were formed on the model of the times, by a small Jacobin publication, called *Le Souper de Beaucaire*, a political dialogue between Marat and a Federalist, in which the latter is overwhelmed and silenced by the arguments and eloquence of the Friend of the People. Of this juvenile production Buonaparte was afterwards so much ashamed, that he caused the copies to be collected and destroyed with the utmost rigour, so that it is now almost impossible to meet with one. It is whimsical to observe, that, in the manuscripts of Saint Helena, he mentions this publication as one in which he assumed the mask of Jacobin principles, merely to convince the Girondists and Royalists that they were choosing an unfit time for insurrection, and attempting it in a hopeless manner. He adds, that it made many converts.

* This letter appeared in the *Moniteur*, 10th December 1793. But as the town of Toulon was taken a few days afterwards, the Convention voted the letter a fabrication.

Buonaparte's professional qualifications were still better vouched than the soundness of his political principles, though these were sufficiently decided. The notes which the inspectors of the Military School always preserve concerning their scholars, described his genius as being of the first order; and to these he owed his promotion to the rank of a brigadier-general of artillery, with the command of the artillery during the siege of Toulon.

When he had arrived at the scene of action, and had visited the posts of the besieging army, he found so many marks of incapacity, that he could not conceal his astonishment. Batteries had been erected for destroying the English shipping, but they were three gun-shots' distance from the point which they were designed to command; red-hot balls were preparing, but they were not heated in furnaces beside the guns, but in the country-houses in the neighbourhood at the most ridiculous distance, as if they had been articles of easy and ordinary transportation. Buonaparte with difficulty obtained General Cartaux's permission to make a shot or two by way of experiment; and when they fell more than half-way short of the mark, the General had no excuse but to rail against the aristocrats, who had, he said, spoiled the quality of the powder with which he was supplied.

The young officer of artillery, with prudence, and at the same time with spirit, made his remonstrances to the member of Convention, Gasparin, who witnessed the experiment, and explained the necessity of proceeding more systematically, if any successful result was expected.

At a council of war, where Gasparin presided, the instructions of the Committee of Public Safety were read, directing that the siege of Toulon should be commenced according to the usual forms, by investing the body of the place, in other words, the city itself. The orders of the Committee of Public Safety were no safe subject of discussion or criticism for those who were to act under them; yet Buonaparte ventured to recommend their being departed from on this important occasion. His comprehensive genius had at once discovered a less direct, yet more certain manner, of obtaining the surrender of the place. He advised, that, neglecting the body of the town, the attention of the besiegers should be turned to attain possession of the promontory called Hauteur de Grasse, by driving the besiegers from the strong work of Fort Mulgrave, and the two redoubts of L'Eguillette and Balagniere, by means of which the English had established the line of defence necessary to protect the fleet and harbour. The fortress of Malbosquet, on the same point, he also recommended as a principal object of attack. He argued, that if the besiegers succeeded in possessing themselves of these fortifications, they must obtain a complete command of the roads where the English fleet lay, and oblige them to put to sea. They would, in the same manner, effectually command the entrance of the bay, and prevent supplies or provisions from being thrown into the city. If the garrison were thus in danger of being totally cut off from supplies by their vessels being driven from their anchorage, it was natural to suppose that the English troops would rather evacuate Toulon, than remain within the place, blockaded on all sides, until they might be compelled to surrender by famine.

The plan was adopted by the council of war after much hesitation, and the young officer by whom it was projected received full powers to carry it on. He rallied round him a number of excellent artillery officers and soldiers; assembled against Toulon more than two hundred pieces of cannon, well served; and stationed them so advantageously, that he annoyed considerably the English vessels in the roads, even before he had constructed those batteries on which he depended for reducing Fort Mulgrave and Malbosquet, by which they were in a great measure protected.

In the meanwhile, General Doppet, formerly a physician, had superseded Cartaux, whose incapacity could no longer be concealed by his rhodomontading language; and, wonderful to tell, it had nearly been the fate of the ex-doctor

to take Toulon, at a time when such an event seemed least within his calculation. A tumultuary attack of some of the young French Carmagnoles on a body of Spanish troops which garrisoned Fort Mulgrave, had very nearly been successful. Buonaparte galloped to the spot, hurrying his reluctant commander along with him, and succours were ordered to advance to support the attack, when an aid-de-camp was shot by Doppet's side; on which the medical general, considering this as a bad symptom, pronounced the case desperate, and, to Buonaparte's great indignation, ordered a retreat to be commenced. Doppet being found as incapable as Cartaux, was in his turn superseded by Dugommier, a veteran who had served for fifty years, was covered with scars, and as fearless as the weapon he wore.

From this time the Commandant of Artillery, having the complete concurrence of his General, had no doubt of success. To ensure it, however, he used the utmost vigilance and exertion, and exposed his person to every risk.

One of the dangers which he incurred was of a singular character. An artilleryman being shot at the gun which he was serving, while Napoleon was visiting a battery, he took up the dead man's rammer, and, to give encouragement to the soldiers, charged the gun repeatedly with his own hands. In consequence of using this implement he caught an infectious cutaneous complaint, which, being injudiciously treated and thrown inward, was of great prejudice to his health, until after his Italian campaigns, when he was completely cured by Dr Corvissart; after which, for the first time, he showed that tendency to *embonpoint*, which marked the latter part of his life.

Upon another occasion, while Napoleon was overlooking the construction of a battery, which the enemy endeavoured to interrupt by their fire, he called for some person who could write, that he might dictate an order. A young soldier stepped out of the ranks, and resting the paper on the breast-work, began to write accordingly. A shot from the enemy's battery covered the letter with earth the instant it was finished. "Thank you—we shall have no occasion for sand this bout," said the military secretary. The gaiety and courage of the remark drew Buonaparte's attention on the young man, who was the celebrated General Junot, afterwards created Duke D'Abrantes. During this siege, also, he discovered the talents of Duroc, afterwards one of his most faithful adherents. In these and many other instances, Buonaparte showed his extensive knowledge of mankind, by the deep sagacity which enabled him to discover and attach to him those, whose talents were most distinguished, and most capable of rendering him service.

Notwithstanding the influence which the Commandant of Artillery had acquired, he found himself occasionally thwarted by the members of the Convention upon mission to the siege of Toulon, who latterly were Freron, Ricors, Salicetti, and the younger Robespierre. These representatives of the people, knowing that their commission gave them supreme power over generals and armies, never seem to have paused to consider whether nature or education had qualified them to exercise it, with advantage to the public and credit to themselves. They criticised Buonaparte's plan of attack, finding it impossible to conceive how his operations, being directed against detached fortifications at a distance from Toulon, could be eventually the means of placing the town itself with facility in their hands. But Napoleon was patient and temporising; and having the good opinion of Salicetti, and some intimacy with young Robespierre, he contrived to have the works conducted according to his own plan.

The presumption of these dignitaries became the means of precipitating his operations. It was his intention to complete his proposed works against Fort Mulgrave before opening a large and powerful battery, which he had constructed with great silence and secrecy against Malbosquet, so that the whole of his meditated assault might confound the enemy by commencing at the same time. The operations being shrouded by an olive plantation, had been completed

without being observed by the English, whom Buonaparte proposed to attack on the whole line of defence simultaneously. Messrs Freron and Robespierre, however, in visiting the military posts, stumbled upon this masked battery; and having no notion why four mortars and eight twenty-four pounders should remain inactive, they commanded the fire to be opened on Malbosquet without any farther delay.

General O'Hara, confounded at finding this important post exposed to a fire so formidable and unexpected, determined by a strong effort to carry the French battery at once. Three thousand men were employed in this sally; and the General himself, rather contrary to what is considered the duty of the governor of a place of importance, resolved to put himself at their head. The sally was at first completely successful; but while the English pursued the enemy too far, in all the confidence of what they considered as assured victory, Buonaparte availed himself of some broken ground and a covered way, to rally a strong body of troops, bring up reserves, and attack the scattered English both in flank and rear. There was a warm skirmish, in which Napoleon himself received a bayonet wound in the thigh, by which, though a serious injury, he was not, however, disabled. The English were thrown into irretrievable confusion, and retreated, leaving their General wounded, and a prisoner in the hands of the enemy. It is singular, that during his long warfare, Buonaparte was never personally engaged with the British, except in his first, and at Waterloo, his last and fatal battle. The attack upon Acre can scarce be termed an exception, as far as his own person was concerned.

The loss of their commandant, added to the discouragement which began to prevail among the defenders of Toulon, together with the vivacity of the attack which ensued, seem finally to have disheartened the garrison. Five batteries were opened on Fort Mulgrave, the possession of which Buonaparte considered as ensuring success. After a fire of twenty-four hours, Dugommier and Napoleon resolved to try the fate of a general attack, for which the representatives of the people showed no particular zeal. The attacking columns advanced before day, during a heavy shower of rain. They were at first driven back on every point by the most determined opposition; and Dugommier, as he saw the troops fly in confusion, exclaimed, well knowing the consequences of bad success to a General of the Republic, "I am a lost man!" Renewed efforts, however, at last prevailed; the Spanish artillerymen giving way on one point, the fort fell into the possession of the French, who showed no mercy to its defenders.

Three hours, according to Buonaparte, after the fort was taken, the representatives of the people appeared in the trenches, with drawn swords, to congratulate the soldiers on their successful valour, and hear from their Commandant of Artillery, the reiterated assurance, that, this distant fort being gained, Toulon was now their own. In their letter to the Convention, the deputies gave a more favourable account of their own exploits, and failed not to represent Ricors, Salicetti, and young Robespierre, as leading the attack with sabre in hand, and, to use their own phrase, showing the troops the road to victory. On the other hand, they ungraciously forgot, in their despatches, to mention so much as the name of Buonaparte, to whom the victory was entirely to be ascribed.

In the meantime, Napoleon's sagacity was not deceived in the event. The officers of the allied troops, after a hurried council of war, resolved to evacuate Toulon, since the posts gained by the French must drive the English ships from their anchorage, and deprive them of a future opportunity of retreating, if they neglected the passing moment. Lord Hood alone urged a bolder resolution, and recommended the making a desperate effort to regain Fort Mulgrave, and the heights which it commanded. But his spirited counsel was rejected, and the evacuation resolved on; which the panic of the foreign troops, especially

the Neapolitans, would have rendered still more horrible than it proved, but for the steadiness of the British seamen.

The safety of the unfortunate citizens, who had invoked their protection, was not neglected even amid the confusion of the retreat. The numerous merchant vessels and other craft, offered means of transportation to all, who, having to fear the resentment of the republicans, might be desirous of quitting Toulon. Such was the dread of the victors' cruelty, that upwards of fourteen thousand persons accepted this melancholy refuge. Meantime there was other work to do.

It had been resolved, that the arsenal and naval stores, with such of the French ships as were not ready for sea, should be destroyed; and they were set on fire accordingly. This task was in a great measure intrusted to the dauntless intrepidity of Sir Sydney Smith, who carried it through with a degree of order, which, everything considered, was almost marvellous. The assistance of the Spaniards was offered and accepted; and they undertook the duty of scuttling and sinking two vessels used as powder magazines, and destroying some part of the disabled shipping. The rising conflagration growing redder and redder, seemed at length a great volcano, amid which were long distinctly seen the masts and yards of the burning vessels, and which rendered obscurely visible the advancing bodies of republican troops, who attempted on different points to push their way into the place. The Jacobins began to rise in the town upon the flying Royalists;—horrid screams and yells of vengeance, and revolutionary choruses, were heard to mingle with the cries and plaintive entreaties of the remaining fugitives, who had not yet found means of embarkation. The guns from Malbosquet, now possessed by the French, and turned on the bulwarks of the town, increased the uproar. At once a shock, like that of an earthquake, occasioned by the explosion of many hundred barrels of gunpowder, silenced all noise save its own, and threw high into the midnight heaven a thousand blazing fragments, which descended, threatening ruin wherever they fell. A second explosion took place, as the other magazine blew up, with the same dreadful effects.

This tremendous addition to the terrors of the scene, so dreadful in itself, was owing to the Spaniards setting fire to those vessels used as magazines, instead of sinking them, according to the plan which had been agreed upon. Either from ill-will, carelessness, or timidity, they were equally awkward in their attempts to destroy the dismantled ships intrusted to their charge, which fell into the hands of the French but little damaged. The British fleet, with the flotilla crowded with fugitives which it escorted, left Toulon without loss, notwithstanding an ill-directed fire maintained on them from the batteries which the French had taken.

It was upon this night of terror, conflagration, tears, and blood, that the star of Napoleon first ascended the horizon; and though it gleamed over many a scene of horror ere it set, it may be doubtful whether its light was ever blended with those of one more dreadful.

The capture of Toulon crushed all the hopes of resistance to the Jacobins, which had been cherished in the south of France. There was a strong distrust excited against England, who was judged only desirous to avail herself of the insurrection of these unhappy citizens to cripple and destroy the naval power of France, without the wish of effectually assisting the Royalists. This was an unjust belief, but it cannot be denied that there were specious grounds for the accusation. The undertaking the protection of a city in such a situation as that of Toulon, if the measure was embraced at all, should have been supported by efforts worthy of the country whose assistance was implored and granted. Such efforts were not made, and the assistance actually afforded was not directed by talent, and was squandered by disunion. The troops showed gallantry; but the leaders, excepting the naval officers, evinced little military

skill, or united purpose of defence. One gentleman, then in private life, chancing to be in Toulon at the time, distinguished himself as a volunteer,* and has since achieved a proud career in the British army. Had he, or such as he, been at the head of the garrison, the walls of Toulon might have seen a battle like that of Barossa, and a very different result of the siege might probably have ensued.

So many of the citizens of Toulon concerned in the late resistance had escaped, by the means provided by the English, that republican vengeance could not collect its victims in the usual numbers. Many were shot, however, and it has been said that Buonaparte commanded the artillery, by which, as at Lyons, they were exterminated; and also, that he wrote a letter to Freron and the younger Robespierre, congratulating them and himself on the execution of these aristocrats, and signed Brutus Buonaparte, Sans-culotte. If he actually commanded at this execution, he had the poor apology, that he must do so or himself perish; but, had the fact and the letter been genuine, there has been enough of time since his downfall to prove the truth of the accusation, and certainly enough of writers disposed to give these proofs publicity. He himself positively denied the charge; and alleged that the victims were shot by a detachment of what was called the Revolutionary Army, and not by troops of the line. This we think highly probable. Buonaparte has besides affirmed, that far from desiring to sharpen the vengeance of the Jacobins, or act as their agent, he hazarded the displeasure of those whose frown was death, by interposing his protection to save the unfortunate family of Chabillant, emigrants and aristocrats, who, being thrown by a storm on the coast of France, shortly after the siege of Toulon, became liable to punishment by the guillotine, but whom he saved by procuring them the means of escape by sea.

In the meanwhile the young General of Artillery was rapidly rising in reputation. The praises which were suppressed by the representatives of the people, were willingly conferred and promulgated by the frank old veteran, Dugommier. Buonaparte's name was placed on the list of those whom he recommended for promotion, with the pointed addition, that, if neglected, he would be sure to force his own way. He was accordingly confirmed in his provisional situation of Chief of Battalion, and appointed to hold that rank in the Army of Italy. Before joining that army, the genius of Napoleon was employed by the Convention in surveying and fortifying the sea-coast of the Mediterranean; a very troublesome task, as it involved many disputes with the local authorities of small towns and villages, and even hamlets, all of whom wished to have batteries erected for their own special protection, without regard to the general safety. It involved him, moreover, as we shall presently see, in some risk with the Convention at home.

The chief of battalion discharged his task scientifically. He divided the necessary fortifications into three classes, distinguishing those designed to protect harbours and roadsteads, from such as were intended to defend anchorages of less consequence, and both from the third class, which were to be placed on proper situations, to prevent insults and partial descents on the coast by an enemy superior at sea. Napoleon dictated to General Gourgaud hints on this subject, which must be of consequence to the sea-coasts which need such military defences.†

Having made his report to the Convention, Buonaparte proceeded to join the

* Mr Graham of Balgowan, now Lord Lynedoch. He marched out on one of the sorties, and when the affair became hot, seized the musket and cartouch-box of a fallen soldier, and afforded such an example to the troops, as contributed greatly to their gaining the object desired.

† An Englishman will probably remember the sublime passage in "The Mariners of England;"—

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is on the mountain-wave,
Her home is on the deep.

head quarters of the French army, then lying at Nice, straitened considerably and hemmed in by the Sardinians and Austrians, who, after some vain attempts of General Brunet to dislodge them, had remained masters of the Col di Tende, and lower passes of the Alps, together with the road leading from Turin to Nice by Saorgio.

Buonaparte had influence enough to recommend with success to the general, Dumorbion, and the representatives of the people, Ricors and Robespierre, a plan for driving the enemy out of this position, forcing them to retreat beyond the higher Alps, and taking Saorgio; all which measures succeeded as he had predicted. Saorgio surrendered, with much ~~stores~~ and baggage, and the French army obtained possession of the chain of the higher Alps,* which, being tenable by defending few and difficult passes, placed a great part of the Army of Italy, (as it was already termed, though only upon the frontier,) at disposal for actual service. While directing the means of attaining these successes, Buonaparte, at the same time, acquired a complete acquaintance with that Alpine country, in which he was shortly to obtain victories in his own name, not in that of others, who obtained reputation by acting on his suggestions. But while he was thus employed, he was involved in an accusation before the Convention, which, had his reputation been less for approved patriotism, might have cost him dear.

In his plans for the defence of the Mediterranean, Napoleon had proposed repairing an old state prison at Marseilles, called the fort of Saint Nicholas, that it might serve as a powder magazine. This plan his successor on the station proceeded to execute, and by doing so, gave umbrage to the patriots, who charged the commandant of artillery then at Marseilles, and superintending the work, with an intention to rebuild this fort, to serve as a Bastille for controlling the good citizens. The officer being summoned to the bar of the Convention, proved that the plan was not his own, but drawn out by Buonaparte. The representatives of the army in Italy, however, not being able to dispense with his services, wrote to the Convention in his behalf, and gave such an account of the origin and purpose of the undertaking, as divested it of all shade of suspicion, even in the suspicious eye of the Committee of Public Safety.

In the remainder of the year 1794, there was little service of consequence in the Army of Italy, and the 9th and 10th Thermidor (27th and 28th July) of that year, brought the downfall of Robespierre, and threatened unfavourable consequences to Buonaparte, who had been the friend of the tyrant's brother, and was understood to have participated in the tone of exaggerated patriotism affected by his party. He endeavoured to shelter himself under his ignorance of the real tendency of the proceedings of those who had fallen; an apology which resolves itself into the ordinary excuse, that he found his late friends had not been the persons he took them for. According to this line of defence, he made all haste to disclaim accession to the political schemes of which they were accused. "I am somewhat affected," he wrote to a correspondent, "at the fate of the younger Robespierre; but had he been my brother, I would have poniarded him with my own hand, had I been aware that he was forming schemes of tyranny."

Buonaparte's disclamations do not seem at first to have been favourably received. His situation was now precarious, and when those members were restored to the Convention, who had been expelled and proscribed by the Jacobins, it became still more so. The reaction of the moderate party, accompanied by horrible recollections of the past, and fears for the future, began now to be more strongly felt, as their numbers in the Convention acquired strength. Those officers who had attached themselves to the Jacobin party, were the objects of their animosity; and besides, they were desirous to purify the armies

* The Sardinians were dislodged from the Col di Tende, 7th of May 1794.

as far as possible of those whom they considered as their own enemies, and those of good order; the rather, that the jacobinical principles still continued to be more favoured in the armies than in the interior.

To the causes of this we have before alluded; but it may not be unnecessary to repeat, that the soldiers had experienced all the advantages of the fierce energies of a government which sent them out to conquest, and offered them the means of achieving it; and they had not been witnesses to the atrocities of their tyranny in the interior. It was highly desirable to the moderate party to diminish the influence of the Jacobins with the army, by dismissing the officers supposed most friendly to such principles. Buonaparte, among others, was superseded in his command, and for a time detained under arrest. This was removed by means of the influence which his countryman Salicetti still retained among the Thermidoriens, and Buonaparte appears to have visited Marseilles, though in a condition to give or receive little consolation from his family.

In May 1795, he came to Paris to solicit employment in his profession. He found himself unfriended and indigent in the city of which he was at no distant period to be the ruler. Some individuals, however, assisted him, and among others the celebrated performer Talma, who had known him while at the Military School, and even then entertained high expectations of the part in life which was to be played by "*le petit Bonaparte*."*

On the other hand, as a favourer of the Jacobins, his solicitations for employment were resolutely opposed by a person of considerable influence. Aubry, an old officer of artillery, president of the military committee, placed himself in strong opposition to his pretensions. He had been nominated as removed from the artillery service to be placed in that of the infantry. He remonstrated with great spirit against this proposed change; and when, in the heat of discussion, Aubry objected his youth, Buonaparte replied, that presence in the field of battle ought to anticipate the claim of years. The president, who had not been much in action, considered his reply as a personal insult; and Napoleon, disdaining farther answer, tendered his resignation. It was not, however, accepted; and he still remained in the rank of expectants, but among those whose hopes were entirely dependent upon their merits.

Buonaparte had something of his native country in his disposition—he forgot neither benefits nor injuries. He was always, during the height of his grandeur, particularly kind to Talma, and honoured him even with a degree of intimacy. As for Aubry, being amongst those belonging to Pichegru's party who were banished to Cayenne, he caused him to be excepted from the decree which permitted the return of those unfortunate exiles, and Aubry died at Demarara.

Meantime, his situation becoming daily more unpleasant, Buonaparte solicited Barras and Freron, who, as Thermidoriens, had preserved their credit, for occupation in almost any line of his profession, and even negotiated for permission to go into the Turkish service, to train the Mussulmans to the use of artillery. A fanciful imagination may pursue him to the rank of Pacha, or higher; for, go where he would, he could not have remained in mediocrity. His own ideas had a similar tendency. "How strange," he said, "it would be, if a little Corsican officer of artillery were to become King of Jerusalem!" He was offered a command in La Vendée, which he declined to accept, and was finally named to command a brigade of artillery in Holland. But it was in a land where there still existed so many separate and conflicting factions as in France, that he was doomed to be raised, amid the struggles of his contending countrymen, and upon their shoulders and over their heads, to the very highest eminence to which Fortune can exalt an individual. The times required such talents as his, and the opportunity for exercising them soon arose.

The French nation were in general tired of the National Convention, which

* On the authority of the late John Philip Kemble.

successive proscriptions had drained of all the talent, eloquence, and energy, it had once possessed; and that Assembly had become hateful and contemptible to all men, by suffering itself to be the passive tool of the Terrorists for two years, when, if they had shown proper firmness, the revolution of the 9th Thermidor might as well have been achieved at the beginning of that frightful anarchy, as after that long period of unheard-of suffering. The Convention was not greatly improved in point of talent, even by the return of their banished brethren; and, in a word, they had lost the confidence of the public entirely. They therefore prepared to gratify the general wish by dissolving themselves.

But before they resigned their ostensible authority, it was necessary to prepare some mode of carrying on the government in future.

The Jacobin constitution of 1793 still existed on paper; but although there was an unrepealed law, menacing with death any one who should propose to alter that form of government, no one appeared disposed to consider it as actually in exercise; and notwithstanding the solemnity with which it had been received and ratified by the sanction of the national voice, it was actually passed over and abrogated as a matter of course, by a tacit but unanimous consent. Neither was there any disposition to adopt the Girondist constitution of 1793, or to revert to the democratic monarchy of 1792, the only one of these models which could be said to have had even the dubious endurance of a few months. As at the general change of the world, all former things were to be done away—all was to be made anew.

Each of these forms of government had been solemnised by the national oaths and processions customary on such occasions; but the opinion was now universally entertained, that not one of them was founded on just principles, or contained the power of defending itself against aggression, and protecting the lives and rights of the subject. On the other hand, every one not deeply interested in the late anarchy, and implicated in the horrid course of bloodshed and tyranny which was its very essence, was frightened at the idea of reviving a government, which was a professed continuation of the despotism ever attendant upon a revolution, and which, in all civilized countries, ought to terminate with the extraordinary circumstances by which revolution has been rendered necessary. To have continued the revolutionary government, indeed, longer than this, would have been to have imitated the conduct of an ignorant empiric, who should persist in subjecting a convalescent patient to the same course of exhausting and dangerous medicines, which a regular physician would discontinue as soon as the disease had been brought to a favourable crisis.

It seems to have been in general felt and admitted, that the blending of the executive and legislative power together, as both had been exercised by the existing Convention, opened the road to the most afflicting tyranny; and that to constitute a stable government, the power of executing the laws, and administering the ministerial functions, must be vested in some separate individuals, or number of individuals, who should, indeed, be responsible to the national legislature for the exercise of this power, but neither subject to their direct control, nor enjoying it as emanating immediately from their body. With these reflections arose others, on the utility of dividing the Legislative Body itself into two assemblies, one of which might form a check on the other, tending, by some exercise of an intermediate authority, to qualify the rash rapidity of a single Chamber, and obstruct the progress of any individual, who might, like Robespierre, obtain a dictatorship in such a body, and become, in doing so, an arbitrary tyrant over the whole authorities of the state. Thus, loath and late, the French began to cast an eye on the British constitution, and the system of checks and balances upon which it is founded, as the best means of uniting the protection of liberty with the preservation of order. Thinking men had come gradually to be aware, that in hopes of getting something better than a system which had been sanctioned by the experience of ages, they had only produced

a set of models, which were successively wondered at, applauded, neglected, and broken to pieces, instead of a simple machine, capable, in mechanical phrase, of working well.

Had such a feeling prevailed during the commencement of the Revolution, as was advocated by Mounier and others, France and Europe might have been spared the bloodshed and distress which afflicted them during a period of more than twenty years of war, with all the various evils which accompanied that great convulsion. France had then a king; nobles, out of whom a senate might have been selected; and abundance of able men to have formed a Lower House, or House of Commons. But the golden opportunity was passed over; and when the architects might, perhaps, have been disposed to execute the new fabric which they meditated, on the plan of a limited monarchy, the materials for the structure were no longer to be found.

The legitimate King of France no doubt existed, but he was an exile in a foreign country; and the race of gentry, from whom a house of peers, or hereditary senate, might have been chiefly selected, were to be found only in foreign service, too much exasperated by their sufferings to admit a rational hope that they would ever make any compromise with those who had forced them from their native land, and confiscated their family property. Saving for these circumstances, and the combinations which arose out of them, it seems very likely, that at the period at which we have now arrived, the tide, which began to set strongly against the Jacobins, might have been adroitly turned in favour of the Bourbons. But though there was a general feeling of melancholy regret, which naturally arose from comparing the peaceful days of the Monarchy with those of the Reign of Terror,—the rule of Louis the XVI. with that of Robespierre,—the memory of former quiet and security with the more recent recollections of blood and plunder,—still it seems to have existed rather in the state of a predisposition to form a royal party, than as the principle of one already existing. Fuel was lying ready to catch the flame of loyalty, but the match had not yet been applied; and to counteract this general tendency, there existed the most formidable obstacles.

In the first place, we have shown already the circumstances by which the French armies were strongly attached to the name of the Republic; in whose cause all their wars had been waged, and all their glory won; by whose expeditious and energetic administration the military profession was benefited, while they neither saw nor felt the misery entailed on the nation at large. But the French soldier had not only fought in favour of Democracy, but actively and directly against Royalty. As *Vive la Republique* was his war-cry, he was in La Vendée, on the Rhine, and elsewhere, met, encountered, and sometimes defeated and driven back, by those who used the opposite signal-word, *Vive le Roi*. The Royalists were, indeed, the most formidable opponents of the military part of the French nation; and such was the animosity of the latter at this period to the idea of returning to the ancient system, that if a general could have been found capable of playing the part of Monk, he would probably have experienced the fate of La Fayette and Dumouriez.

A second and almost insuperable objection to the restoration of the Bourbons, occurred in the extensive change of property that had taken place. If the exiled family had been recalled, they could not, at this very recent period, but have made stipulations for their devoted followers, and insisted that the estates forfeited in their cause, should have been compensated or restored; and such a resumption would have inferred ruin to all the purchasers of national demesnes, and, in consequence, a general shock to the security of property through the kingdom.

The same argument applied to the church lands. The Most Christian King could not resume his throne, without restoring the ecclesiastical establishment in part, if not in whole. It was impossible to calculate the mass of persons

of property and wealth, with their various connexions, who, as possessors of national demesnes, that is, of the property of the church, or of the emigrants, were bound by their own interest to oppose the restoration of the Bourbon family. The revolutionary government had followed the coarse, but striking and deeply politic, admonition of the Scottish Reformer—"Pull down the nests," said Knox, when he urged the multitude to destroy churches and abbeys, "and the rooks will fly off." The French government, by dilapidating and disposing of the property of the emigrants and clergy, had established an almost insurmountable barrier against the return of the original owners. The cavaliers in the great Civil War of England had been indeed fined, sequestered, impoverished; but their estates were still, generally speaking, in their possession; and they retained, though under oppression and poverty, the influence of a national aristocracy, diminished, but not annihilated. In France, that influence of resident proprietors had all been transferred to other hands, tenacious in holding what property they had acquired, and determined to make good the defence of it against those who claimed a prior right.

Lastly, the fears and conscious recollections of those who held the chief power in France for the time, induced them to view their own safety as deeply compromised by any proposition of restoring the exiled royal family. This present sitting and ruling Convention had put to death Louis XVI.,—with what hope of safety could they install his brother on the throne? They had formally, and in full conclave, renounced belief in the existence of a Deity,—with what consistence could they be accessory to restore a national church? Some remained republicans from their heart and upon conviction; and a great many more of the deputies could not abjure democracy, without confessing at the same time, that all the violent measures which they had carried through for the support of that system, were so many great and treasonable crimes.

These fears of a retributive reaction were very generally felt in the Convention. The Thermidoriens, in particular, who had killed Robespierre, and now reigned in his stead, had more substantial grounds of apprehension from any counter-revolutionary movement, than even the body of the Representatives at large, many of whom had been merely passive in scenes where Barras and Tallien had been active agents. The timid party of The Plain might be overawed by the returning Prince; and the members of the Girondists, who could indeed scarce be said to exist as a party, might be safely despised. But the Thermidoriens themselves stood in a different predicament. They were of importance enough to attract both detestation and jealousy; they held power, which must be an object of distrust to the restored Monarch; and they stood on precarious ground, betwixt the hatred of the moderate party, who remembered them as colleagues of Robespierre and Danton, and that of the Jacobins, who saw in Tallien and Barras deserters of that party, and the destroyers of the power of the Sans Culottes. They had, therefore, just reason to fear, that, stripped of the power which they at present possessed, they might become the unpitied and unaided scape-goats, to expiate all the offences of the Revolution.

Thus each favourable sentiment towards the cause of the Bourbons was opposed, I. By their unpopularity with the armies; II. By the apprehensions of the confusion and distress which must arise from a general change of property; and III. By the conscious fears of those influential persons, who conceived their own safety concerned in sustaining the republican model.

Still the idea of monarchy was so generally received as the simplest and best mode of once more re-establishing good order and a fixed government, that some statesmen proposed to resume the form, but change the dynasty. With this view, divers persons were suggested by those, who supposed that by passing over the legitimate heir to the crown, the dangers annexed to his rights and claims might be avoided, and the apprehended measures of resumption and reaction might be guarded against. The son of the Duke of Orleans was named,

but the infamy of his father clung to him. In another wild hypothesis, the Duke of York, or the Duke of Brunswick, were suggested as fit to be named constitutional Kings of France. The Abbé Sieyès himself is said to have expressed himself in favour of the prince last named.*

But without regarding the wishes or opinions of the people without doors, the Convention resolved to establish such a model of government as should be most likely to infuse into a republic something of the stability of a monarchical establishment; and thus at once repair former errors, and preserve an appearance of consistency in the eyes of Europe.

For this purpose eleven commissioners, chiefly selected amongst the former Girondists, were appointed to draw up a new constitution upon a new principle, which was to receive anew the universal adhesion of the French by acclamation and oath, and to fall, in a short time, under the same neglect which had attended every preceding model. This, it was understood, was to be so constructed, as to unite the consistency of a monarchical government with the name and forms of a democracy.

That the system now adopted by the French commissioners might bear a form corresponding to the destinies of the nation, and flattering to its vanity, it was borrowed from that of the Roman republic, an attempt to imitate which had already introduced many of the blunders and many of the crimes of the Revolution. The executive power was lodged in a council of five persons, termed Directors, to whom were to be consigned the conduct of peace and war, the execution of the laws, and the general administration of the government. They were permitted no share of the legislative authority.

This arrangement was adopted to comply with the jealousy of those, who, in the individual person of a single Director, holding a situation similar to that of the Stadtholder in Holland, or the President of the United States, saw something too closely approaching to a monarchical government. Indeed, it is said, Louvet warned them against establishing such an office, by assuring them, that when they referred the choice of the individual who was to hold it, to the nation at large, they would see the Bourbon heir elected. But the inconvenience of this pentarchy could not be disguised; and it seemed to follow as a necessary consequence of such a numerous executive council, either that there would be a schism, and a minority and majority established in that pre-eminent body of the state, where unity and vigour were chiefly requisite, or else that some one or two of the ablest and most crafty among the Directors would establish a supremacy over the others, and use them less as their colleagues than their dependants. The legislators, however, though they knew that the whole Roman empire was found insufficient to satiate the ambition of three men, yet appeared to hope that the concord and unanimity of their five Directors might continue unbroken, though they had but one nation to govern; and they decided accordingly.

The executive power being thus provided for, the Legislative Body was to consist of two councils; one of Elders, as it was called, serving as a House of Lords; another of Youngers, which they termed, from its number, the Council of Five Hundred. Both were elective, and the difference of age was the only circumstance which placed a distinction betwixt the two bodies. The members of the Council of Five Hundred were to be at least twenty-five years old, a qualification which, after the seventh year of the Republic, was to rise to thirty years complete. In this assembly laws were to be first proposed; and, having received its approbation, they were to be referred to the Council of Ancients. The requisites to sit in the latter senate, were the age of forty years

* The Memoirs published under the name of Fouché make this assertion. But although that work shows great intimacy with the secret history of the times, it is not to be implicitly relied upon.

complete, and the being a married man or a widower. Bachelors, though above that age, were deemed unfit for legislation, perhaps from want of domestic experience.

The Council of Ancients had the power of rejecting the propositions laid before them by the Council of Five Hundred, or, by adopting and approving them, that of passing them into laws. These regulations certainly gained one great point, in submitting each proposed legislative enactment to two separate bodies, and, of course, to mature and deliberate consideration. It is true, that neither of the Councils had any especial character, or separate interest, which could enable or induce the Ancients, as a body, to suggest to the Five Hundred a different principle of considering any proposed measure, from that which was likely to occur to them in their own previous deliberation. No such varied views, therefore, were to be expected, as must arise between assemblies composed of persons who differ in rank or fortune, and consequently view the same question in various and opposite lights. Still, delay and reconsideration were attained, before the irrevocable fiat was imposed upon any measure of consequence; and so far much was gained. An orator was supposed to answer all objections to the system of the two Councils thus constituted, when he described that of the Juniors as being the Imagination, that of the Ancients as being the Judgment of the nation; the one designed to invent and suggest national measures, the other to deliberate and decide upon them. This was, though liable to many objections, an ingenious illustration indeed; but an illustration is not an argument, though often passing current as such.

On the whole, the form of the Constitution of the year 3, *i. e.* 1794, showed a greater degree of practical efficacy, sense, and consistency, than any of those previously suggested; and in the introduction, though there was the usual proclamation of the Rights of Man, his Duties to the laws and to the social system were for the first time enumerated in manly and forcible language, intimating the desire of the framers of these institutions to put a stop to the continuation of revolutionary violence in future.

But the Constitution, now promulgated, had a blemish common to all its predecessors;—it was totally new, and unsanctioned by the experience either of France or any other country; a mere experiment in politics, the result of which could not be known until it had been put in exercise, and which, for many years at least, must be necessarily less the object of respect than of criticism. Wise legislators, even when lapse of time, alteration of manners, or increased liberality of sentiment, require corresponding alterations in the institutions of their fathers, are careful, as far as possible, to preserve the ancient form and character of those laws, into which they are endeavouring to infuse principles and a spirit accommodated to the altered exigencies and temper of the age. There is an enthusiasm in patriotism as well as in religion. We value institutions, not only because they are ours, but because they have been those of our fathers; and if a new Constitution were to be presented to us, although perhaps theoretically showing more symmetry than that by which the nation had been long governed, it would be as difficult to transfer to it the allegiance of the people, as it would be to substitute the worship of a Madonna, the work of modern art, for the devotion paid by the natives of Saragossa to their ancient Palladium, Our Lady of the Pillar.

But the Constitution of the year 3, with all its defects, would have been willingly received by the nation in general, as affording some security from the revolutionary storm, had it not been for a selfish and usurping device of the Thermidoriens to mutilate and render it nugatory at the very outset, by engrafting upon it the means of continuing the exercise of their own arbitrary authority. It must never be forgotten, that these conquerors of Robespierre had shared all the excesses of his party before they became his personal enemies; and that

when deprived of their official situations and influence, which they were likely to be by a representative body freely and fairly elected, they were certain to be exposed to great individual danger.

Determined, therefore, to retain the power in their own hands, the Thermidoriens suffered, with an indifference amounting almost to contempt, the Constitution to pass through, and be approved of by, the Convention. But, under pretence that it would be highly impolitic to deprive the nation of the services of men accustomed to public business, they procured two decrees to be passed; the first ordaining the electoral bodies of France to choose, as representatives to the two councils under the new Constitution, at least two-thirds of the members presently sitting in Convention; and the second declaring, that in default of a return of two-thirds of the present deputies, as prescribed, the Convention themselves should fill up the vacancies out of their own body; in other words, should name a large proportion of themselves their own successors in legislative power.

These decrees were sent down to the Primary Assemblies of the people, and every art was used to render them acceptable.

But the nation, and particularly the city of Paris, generally revolted at this stretch of arbitrary authority. They recollected, that all the members who had sat in the first National Assembly, so remarkable for talent, had been declared ineligible, on that single account, for the second Legislative Body; and now, men so infinitely the inferiors of those who were the colleagues of Mirabeau, Mounier, and other great names, presumed not only to declare themselves eligible by re-election, but dared to establish two-thirds of their number as indispensable ingredients of the Legislative Assemblies, which, according to the words alike and spirit of the Constitution, ought to be chosen by the free voice of the people. The electors, and particularly those of the sections of Paris, angrily demanded to know, upon what public services the deputies of the Convention founded their title to a privilege so unjust and anomalous. Among the more active part of them, to whom the measure was chiefly to be ascribed, they saw but a few reformed Terrorists, who wished to retain the power of tyranny, though disposed to exercise it with some degree of moderation, and the loss of whose places might be possibly followed by that of their heads; in the others, they only beheld a flock of timid and discountenanced Helots, willing to purchase personal security at the sacrifice of personal honour and duty to the public; while in the Convention as a body, who pronounced so large a proportion of their number as indispensable to the service of the state, judging from their conduct hitherto, they could but discover an image composed partly of iron, partly of clay, deluged with the blood of many thousand victims—a pageant without a will of its own, and which had been capable of giving its countenance to the worst of actions, at the instigation of the worst of men—a sort of Moloch, whose name had been used by its priests to compel the most barbarous sacrifices. To sum up the whole, these experienced men of public business, without whose intermediation it was pretended the national affairs could not be carried on, could only shelter themselves from the charge of unbounded wickedness, by pleading their unlimited cowardice, and by poorly alleging that for two years they had sat, voted, and deliberated, under a system of compulsion and terror. So much meanness rendered those who were degraded by it unfit, not merely to rule, but to live; and yet two-thirds of their number were, according to their own decrees, to be intruded on the nation as an indispensable portion of its representatives.

Such was the language held in the assemblies of the sections of Paris, who were the more irritated against the domineering and engrossing spirit exhibited in these usurping enactments, because it was impossible to forget that it was their interference, and the protection afforded by their National Guard, which had saved the Convention from massacre on more occasions than one.

In the meanwhile, reports continued to be made from the Primary Assemblies, of their adhesion to the constitution, in which they were almost unanimous, and of their sentiments concerning the two decrees, authorising and commanding the re-election of two-thirds of the Convention, on which there existed a strong difference of opinion. The Convention, determined, at all rates, to carry through with a high hand the iniquitous and arbitrary measure which they proposed, failed not to make these reports such as they desired them to be, and announced that the two decrees had been accepted by a majority of the Primary Assemblies. The citizens of Paris challenged the accuracy of the returns—alleged that the reports were falsified—demanded a scrutiny, and openly bid defiance to the Convention. Their power of meeting together in their sections, on account of the appeal to the people, gave them an opportunity of feeling their own strength, and encouraging each other by speeches and applauses. They were farther emboldened and animated by men of literary talent, whose power was restored with the liberty of the press. Finally, they declared their sittings permanent, and that they had the right to protect the liberties of France. The greater part of the National Guards were united on this occasion against the existing government; and nothing less was talked of, than that they should avail themselves of their arms and numbers, march down to the Tuilleries, and dictate law to the Convention with their muskets, as the revolutionary mob of the suburbs used to do with their pikes.

The Convention, unpopular themselves, and embarked in an unpopular cause, began to look anxiously around for assistance. They chiefly relied on the aid of about five thousand regular troops, who were assembled in and around Paris. These declared for government with the greater readiness, that the insurrection was of a character decidedly aristocratical, and that the French armies, as already repeatedly noticed, were attached to the Republic. But besides, these professional troops entertained the usual degree of contempt for the National Guards, and on this account alone were quite ready to correct the insolence of the *pekins*,* or *muscadins*,† who usurped the dress and character of soldiers. The Convention had also the assistance of several hundred artillerymen, who, since the taking of the Bastille, had been always zealous democrats. Still apprehensive of the result, they added to this force another of a more ominous description. It was a body of volunteers, consisting of about fifteen hundred men, whom they chose to denominate the Sacred Band, or the Patriots of 1789. They were gleaned out of the suburbs, and from the jails, the remnants of the insurrectional battalions which had formed the body-guard of Hebert and Robespierre, and had been the instruments by which they executed their atrocities. The Convention proclaimed them men of the 10th of August—undoubtedly they were also men of the massacres of September. It was conceived that the beholding such a pack of bloodhounds, ready to be let loose, might inspire horror into the citizens of Paris, to whom their very aspect brought so many fearful recollections. It did so, but it also inspired hatred; and the number and zeal of the citizens, compensating for the fury of the Terrorists, and for the superior discipline of the regular troops to be employed against them, promised an arduous and doubtful conflict.

Much, it was obvious, must depend upon the courage and conduct of the leaders.

The sections employed, as their commander-in-chief, General Danican, an old officer of no high reputation for military skill, but otherwise a worthy and sincere man. The Convention at first made choice of Menou, and directed him, supported by a strong military force, to march into the section Le Pelletier, and

* *Pekins*, a word of contempt, by which the soldiers distinguished those who did not belong to their profession.

† *Muscadins*, fops—a phrase applied to the better class of *Sans Culottes*.

disarm the National Guards of that district. This section is one of the most wealthy, and of course most aristocratic, in Paris, being inhabited by bankers, merchants, the wealthiest class of tradesmen, and the better orders in general. Its inhabitants had formerly composed the battalion of National Guards des Filles Saint Thomas, the only one which, taking part in the defence of the Tuilleries, shared the fate of the Swiss Guards upon the memorable 10th of August. The section continued to entertain sentiments of the same character, and when Menou appeared at the head of his forces, accompanied by La Porte, a member of the Convention, he found the citizens under arms, and exhibiting such a show of resistance, as induced him, after a parley, to retreat without venturing an attack upon them.

Menou's indecision showed that he was not a man suited to the times, and he was suspended from his command by the Convention, and placed under arrest. The general management of affairs, and the direction of the Conventional forces, was then committed to Barras; but the utmost anxiety prevailed among the members of the committees by whom government was administered, to find a General of nerve and decision enough to act under Barras, in the actual command of the military force, in a service so delicate, and times so menacing. It was then that a few words from Barras, addressed to his colleagues, Carnot and Tallien, decided the fate of Europe for well nigh twenty years. "I have the man," he said, "whom you want; a little Corsican officer, who will not stand upon ceremony."

The acquaintance of Barras and Buonaparte had been, as we have already said, formed at the siege of Toulon, and the former had not forgotten the inventive and decisive genius of the young officer to whom the conquest of that city was to be ascribed. On the recommendation of Barras, Buonaparte was sent for. He had witnessed the retreat of Menou, and explained with much simplicity the causes of that check, and the modes of resistance which ought to be adopted in case of the apprehended attack. His explanations gave satisfaction. Buonaparte was placed at the head of the Conventional forces, and took all the necessary precautions to defend the same palace which he had seen attacked and carried by a body of insurgents on the 10th of August. But he possessed far more formidable means of defence than were in the power of the unfortunate Louis. He had two hundred pieces of cannon, which his high military skill enabled him to distribute to the utmost advantage. He had more than five thousand regular forces, and about fifteen hundred volunteers. He was thus enabled to defend the whole circuit of the Tuilleries; to establish posts in all the avenues by which it could be approached; to possess himself of the bridges, so as to prevent co-operation between the sections which lay on the opposite banks of the river; and finally, to establish a strong reserve in the Place Louis Quinze, or, as it was then called, Place de la Revolution. Buonaparte had only a few hours to make all these arrangements, for he was named in place of Menou late on the night before the conflict.

A merely civic army, having no cannon, (for the field-pieces, of which each section possessed two, had been almost all given up to the Convention after the disarming the suburb of Saint Antoine,) ought to have respected so strong a position as the Tuilleries, when so formidably defended. Their policy should have been, as in the days of Henry II., to have barricaded the streets at every point, and cooped up the Conventional troops within the defensive position they had assumed, till want of provisions obliged them to sally at disadvantage, or to surrender. But a popular force is generally impatient of delay. The retreat of Menou had given them spirit, and they apprehended, with some show of reason, that the sections, if they did not unite their forces, might be attacked and disarmed separately. They therefore resolved to invest the Convention in a hostile manner, require of the members to recall the obnoxious decrees, and allow the nation to make a free and undictated election of its representatives

On the 13th Vendemaire, corresponding to the 4th October, the civil affray, commonly called the Day of the Sections, took place. The National Guards assembled, to the number of thirty thousand men and upwards, but having no artillery. They advanced by different avenues, in close columns, but everywhere found the most formidable resistance. One large force occupied the quays on the left bank of the Seine, threatening the palace from that side of the river. Another strong division advanced on the Tuilleries, through the street of St Honoré, designing to debouche on the palace, where the Convention was sitting, by the Rue de l'Echelle. They did so, without duly reflecting that they were flanked on most points by strong posts in the lanes and crossings, defended by artillery.

The contest began in the Rue St Honoré. Buonaparte had established a strong post with two guns at the Cul-de-Sac Dauphine, opposite to the Church of St Roche. He permitted the imprudent Parisians to involve their long and dense columns in the narrow street without interruption, until they established a body of grenadiers in the front of the church, and opposite to the position at the Cul-de-Sac. Each party, as usual, throws on the other the blame of commencing the civil contest for which both were prepared. But all agree the firing commenced with musketry. It was instantly followed by discharges of grape-shot and cannister, which, pointed as the guns were, upon thick columns of the National Guards, arranged on the quays and in the narrow streets, made an astounding carnage. The National Guards offered a brave resistance, and even attempted to rush on the artillery, and carry the guns by main force. But a measure which is desperate enough in the open field, becomes impossible when the road to assault lies through narrow streets, which are swept by the cannon at every discharge. The citizens were compelled to give way. By a more judicious arrangement of their respective forces different results might have been hoped; but how could Danican in any circumstances have competed with Buonaparte? The affair, in which several hundred men were killed and wounded, was terminated as a general action in about an hour; and the victorious troops of the Convention, marching into the different sections, completed the dispersion and disarming of their opponents, an operation which lasted till late at night.

The Convention used this victory with the moderation which recollection of the Reign of Terror had inspired. Only two persons suffered death for the Day of the Sections. One of them, La Fond, had been a Garde de Corps, was distinguished for his intrepidity, and repeatedly rallied the National Guard under the storm of grape-shot. Several other persons having fled, were in their absence capitally condemned, but were not strictly looked after; and deportation was the punishment inflicted upon others. The accused were indebted for this clemency chiefly to the interference of those members of Convention, who, themselves exiled on the 31st of May, had suffered persecution, and learned mercy.

The Convention showed themselves at the same time liberal to their protectors. General Berruyer, who commanded the volunteers of 1789, and other general officers employed on the Day of the Sections, were loaded with praises and preferment. But a separate triumph was destined to Buonaparte, as the hero of the day. Five days after the battle, Barras solicited the attention of the Convention to the young officer, by whose prompt and skilful dispositions the Tuilleries had been protected on the 13th Vendemaire, and proposed that they should approve of General Buonaparte's appointment as second in command of the Army of the Interior, Barras himself still remaining commander-in-chief. The proposal was adopted by acclamation. The Convention retained their resentment against Menou, whom they suspected of treachery; but Buonaparte interfering as a mediator, they were content to look over his offence.

After this decided triumph over their opponents, the Convention ostensibly laid down their authority, and retiring from the scene in their present character,

appeared upon it anew in that of a Primary Assembly, in order to make choice of such of their members as, by virtue of the decrees of two-thirds, as they were called, were to remain on the stage, as members of the Legislative Councils of Elders and Five Hundred.

After this change of names and dresses, resembling the shifts of a strolling company of players, the two-thirds of the old Convention, with one-third of members newly elected, took upon them the administration of the new constitution. The two re-elected thirds formed a large proportion of the councils, and were, in some respects, much like those unfortunate women, who, gathered from jails and from the streets of the metropolis, have been sometimes sent out to foreign settlements; and, however profligate their former lives may have been, often regain character, and become tolerable members of society, in a change of scene and situation.

The Directory consisted of Barras, Sieyes, Reubel, Latourneur de la Manche, and Reveilliere Lepaux, to the exclusion of Tallien, who was deeply offended. Four of these Directors were reformed Jacobins, or Thermidoriens; the fifth, Reveilliere Lepaux, was esteemed a Girondist. Sieyes, whose taste was rather for speculating in politics than acting in them, declined what he considered a hazardous office, and was replaced by Carnot.

The nature of the insurrection of the Sections was not ostensibly royalist, but several of its leaders were of that party in secret, and, if successful, it would most certainly have assumed that complexion. Thus, the first step of Napoleon's rise commenced by the destruction of the hopes of the House of Bourbon, under the reviving influence of which, twenty years afterwards, he himself was obliged to succumb. But the long path which closed so darkly, was now opening upon him in light and joy. Buonaparte's high services, and the rank which he had obtained, rendered him now a young man of the first hope and expectation, mingling on terms of consideration among the rulers of the state, instead of being regarded as a neglected stranger, supporting himself with difficulty, and haunting public offices and bureaux in vain, to obtain some chance of preferment, or even employment.

From second in command, the new General soon became General-in-chief of the Army of the Interior, Barras having found his duties as a Director were incompatible with those of military command. He employed his genius, equally prompt and profound, in improving the state of the military forces; and, in order to prevent the recurrence of such insurrections as that of the 13th Vendémiaire, or Day of the Sections, and as the many others by which it was preceded, he appointed and organized a guard for the protection of the Representative Body.

As the dearth of bread, and other causes of disaffection, continued to produce commotions in Paris, the General of the Interior was sometimes obliged to oppose them with the military force. On one occasion, it is said, that when Buonaparte was anxiously admonishing the multitude to disperse, a very bulky woman exhorted them to keep their ground. "Never mind these coxcombs with the epaulettes," she said; "they do not care if we are all starved, so they themselves feed and get fat."—"Look at me, good woman," said Buonaparte, who was then as thin as a shadow; "and tell me which is the fatter of us two." This turned the laugh against the Amazon, and the rabble dispersed in good-humour. If not among the most distinguished of Napoleon's victories, this is certainly worthy of record, as achieved at the least cost.

Meantime circumstances, which we will relate according to his own statement, introduced Buonaparte to an acquaintance, which was destined to have much influence on his future fate. A fine boy, of ten or twelve years old, presented himself at the levee of the General of the Interior, with a request of a nature unusually interesting. He stated his name to be Eugene Beauharnois, son of the ci-devant Vicomte de Beauharnois, who, adhering to the revolutionary party,

had been a general in the Republican service upon the Rhine, and falling under the causeless suspicion of the Committee of Public Safety, was delivered to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and fell by its sentence just four days before the overthrow of Robespierre. Eugene was come to request of Buonaparte, as General of the Interior, that his father's sword might be restored to him. The prayer of the young suppliant was as interesting as his manners were engaging, and Napoleon felt so much interest in him, that he was induced to cultivate the acquaintance of Eugene's mother, afterwards the Empress Josephine.

This lady was a Creolian, the daughter of a planter in St Domingo. Her name at full length was Marie Joseph Rose Tascher de la Pagerie. She had suffered her share of revolutionary miseries. After her husband, General Beauharnois, had been deprived of his command, she was arrested as a suspected person, and detained in prison till the general liberation, which succeeded the revolution of 9th Thermidor. While in confinement, Madame Beauharnois had formed an intimacy with a companion in distress, Madame Fontenai, now Madame Tallien, from which she derived great advantages after her friend's marriage. With a remarkably graceful person, amiable manners, and an inexhaustible fund of good-humour, Madame Beauharnois was formed to be an ornament to society. Barras, the Thermidorien hero, himself an ex-noble, was fond of society, desirous of enjoying it on an agreeable scale, and of washing away the dregs which Jacobinism had mingled with all the dearest interests of life. He loved show, too, and pleasure, and might now indulge both without the risk of falling under the suspicion of incivism, which, in the reign of Terror, would have been incurred by any attempt to intermingle elegance with the enjoyments of social intercourse. At the apartments which he occupied, as one of the Directory, in the Luxemburg Palace, he gave its free course to his natural taste, and assembled an agreeable society of both sexes. Madame Tallien and her friend formed the soul of these assemblies, and it was supposed that Barras was not insensible to the charms of Madame Beauharnois,—a rumour which was likely to arise, whether with or without foundation.

When Madame Beauharnois and General Buonaparte became intimate, the latter assures us, and we see no reason to doubt him, that although the lady was two or three years older than himself,* yet being still in the full bloom of beauty, and extremely agreeable in her manners, he was induced, solely by her personal charms, to make her an offer of his hand, heart, and fortunes,—little supposing, of course, to what a pitch the latter were to arise.

Although he himself is said to have been a fatalist, believing in destiny and in the influence of his star, he knew nothing, probably, of the prediction of a negro sorceress, who, while Marie Joseph was but a child, prophesied she should rise to a dignity greater than that of a queen, yet fall from it before her death.† This was one of those vague auguries, delivered at random by fools or impostors, which the caprice of Fortune sometimes matches with a corresponding and conforming event. But without trusting to the African sibyl's prediction, Buonaparte may have formed his match under the auspices of ambition as well as love. The marrying Madame Beauharnois was a mean of uniting his fortune with those of Barras and Tallien, the first of whom governed France as one of the Directors; and the last, from talents and political connexions, had scarcely inferior influence. He had already deserved well of them for his con-

* Buonaparte was then in his twenty-sixth year. Josephine gave herself in the marriage contract for twenty-eight.

† A lady of high rank, who happened to live for some time in the same convent at Paris, where Josephine was also a pensioner or boarder, heard her mention the prophecy, and told it herself to the author, just about the time of the Italian expedition, when Buonaparte was beginning to attract notice. Another clause is usually added to the prediction—that the party whom it concerned should die in an hospital, which was afterwards explained as referring to Malmaison. This the author did not hear from the same authority. The lady mentioned used to speak in the highest terms of the simple manners and great kindness of Madame Beauharnois.

duct on the Day of the Sections, but he required their countenance to rise still higher; and without derogating from the bride's merits, we may suppose her influence in their society corresponded with the views of her lover. It is, however, certain, that he always regarded her with peculiar affection; that he relied on her fate, which he considered as linked with and strengthening his own; and reposed, besides, considerable confidence in Josephine's tact and address in political business. She had at all times the art of mitigating his temper, and turning aside the hasty determinations of his angry moments, not by directly opposing, but by gradually parrying and disarming them. It must be added to her great praise, that she was always a willing, and often a successful advocate, in the cause of humanity.

They were married 9th March 1796; and the dowry of the bride was the chief command of the Italian armies, a scene which opened a full career to the ambition of the youthful General. Buonaparte remained with his wife only three days after his marriage, hastened to see his family, who were still at Marseilles, and, having enjoyed the pleasure of exhibiting himself as a favourite of Fortune in the city which he had lately left in the capacity of an indigent adventurer, proceeded rapidly to commence the career to which Fate called him, by placing himself at the head of the Italian army.

CHAPTER XX.

The Alps.—Feelings and Views of Buonaparte on being appointed to the Command of the Army of Italy—General Account of his new Principles of Warfare—Mountainous Countries peculiarly favourable to them.—Retrospect of Military Proceedings since October 1795.—Hostility of the French Government to the Pope.—Massacre of the French Envoy Basseville, at Rome.—Austrian Army under Beaulieu.—Napoleon's Plan for entering Italy—Battle of Monte Notte, and Buonaparte's first Victory—Again defeats the Austrians at Millesimo—and again under Colli—Takes possession of Cherasco—King of Sardinia requests an Armistice, which leads to a Peace, concluded on very severe Terms.—Close of the Piedmontese Campaign.—Napoleon's Character at this period.

NAPOLEON has himself observed, that no country in the world is more distinctly marked out by its natural boundaries than Italy. The Alps seem a barrier erected by Nature herself, on which she has inscribed in gigantic characters, "Here let Ambition be staid." Yet this tremendous circumvallation of mountains, as it could not prevent the ancient Romans from breaking out to desolate the world, so it has been in like manner found, ever since the days of Hannibal, unequal to protect Italy herself from invasion. The French nation, in the times of which we treat, spoke indeed of the Alps as a natural boundary, so far as to authorize them to claim all which lay on the western side of these mountains, as naturally pertaining to their dominions; but they never deigned to respect them as such, when the question respected their invading on their own part the territories of other states, which lay on or beyond the formidable frontier. They assumed the law of natural limits as an unchallengeable rule when it made in favour of France, but never allowed it to be quoted against her interest.

During the Revolutionary War, the general fortune of battle had varied from time to time in the neighbourhood of these mighty boundaries. The King of Sardinia possessed almost all the fortresses which command the passes on these mountains, and had therefore been said to wear the keys of the Alps at his girdle. He had indeed lost his Dukedom of Savoy, and the County of Nice,

In the last campaign; but he still maintained in opposition to the French a very considerable army, and was supported by his powerful ally the Emperor of Austria, always vigilant regarding that rich and beautiful portion of his dominions which lies in the north of Italy. The frontiers of Piedmont were therefore covered by a strong Austro-Sardinian army, opposed to the French armies to which Napoleon had been just named Commander-in-chief. A strong Neapolitan force was also to be added, so that in general numbers their opponents were much superior to the French; but a great part of this force was cooped up in garrisons which could not be abandoned.

It may be imagined with what delight the General, scarce aged twenty-six, advanced to an independent field of glory and conquest, confident in his own powers, and in the perfect knowledge of the country which he had acquired, when, by his scientific plans of the campaign, he had enabled General Dumorbion to drive the Austrians back, and obtain possession of the Col di Tende, Saorgio, and the gorges of the higher Alps. Buonaparte's achievements had hitherto been under the auspices of others. He made the dispositions before Toulon, but it was Dugommier who had the credit of taking the place. Dumorbion, as we have just said, obtained the merit of the advantages in Piedmont. Even in the civil turmoil of 13th Vendemaire, his actual services had been overshadowed by the official dignity of Barras, as Commander-in-chief. But if he reaped honour in Italy, the success would be exclusively his own; and that proud heart must have throbbed to meet danger upon such terms; that keen spirit have toiled to discover the means of success.

For victory, he relied chiefly upon a system of tactics hitherto unpractised in war, or at least upon any considerable or uniform scale. It may not be unnecessary to pause, to take a general view of the principles which he now called into action.

Nations in the savage state, being constantly engaged in war, always form for themselves some peculiar mode of fighting, suited to the country they inhabit, and to the mode in which they are armed. The North-American Indian becomes formidable as a rifleman or sharpshooter, lays ambuscades in his pathless forests, and practises all the arts of irregular war. The Arab, or Scythian, manœuvres his clouds of cavalry, so as to envelope and destroy his enemy in his deserts by sudden onsets, rapid retreats, and unexpected rallies; desolating the country around, cutting off his antagonist's supplies, and practising, in short, the species of war proper to a people superior in light cavalry.

The first stage of civilization is less favourable to success in war. As a nation advances in the peaceful arts, and the character of the soldier begins to be less familiarly united with that of the citizen, this system of natural tactics falls out of practice; and when foreign invasion, or civil broils, call the inhabitants to arms, they have no idea save that of finding out the enemy, rushing upon him, and committing the event to superior strength, bravery, or numbers. An example may be seen in the great Civil War of England, where men fought on both sides, in almost every county of the kingdom, without any combination, or exact idea of uniting in mutual support, or manœuvring so as to form their insulated bands into an army of preponderating force. At least, what was attempted for that purpose must have been on the rudest plan possible, where, even in actual fight, that part of an army which obtained any advantage, pursued it as far as they could, instead of using their success for the support of their companions; so that the main body was often defeated when a victorious wing was in pursuit of those whom their first onset had broken.

But as war becomes a profession, and a subject of deep study, it is gradually discovered, that the principles of tactics depend upon mathematical and arithmetical science; and that the commander will be victorious who can assemble the greatest number of forces upon the same point at the same moment, notwithstanding an inferiority of numbers to the enemy when the general force is com-

puted on both sides. No man ever possessed in a greater degree than Buonaparte, the power of calculation and combination necessary for directing such decisive manœuvres. It constituted indeed his secret—as it was for some time called—and that secret consisted in an imagination fertile in expedients which would never have occurred to others; clearness and precision in forming his plans; a mode of directing with certainty the separate moving columns which were to execute them, by arranging so that each division should arrive on the destined position at the exact time when their service was necessary; and above all, in the knowledge which enabled such a master-spirit to choose the most fitting subordinate implements, to attach them to his person, and, by explaining to them so much of his plan as it was necessary each should execute, to secure the exertion of their utmost ability in carrying it into effect.

Thus, not only were his manœuvres, however daring, executed with a precision which warlike operations had not attained before his time; but they were also performed with a celerity which gave them almost always the effect of surprise. Napoleon was like lightning in the eyes of his enemies; and when repeated experience had taught them to expect this portentous rapidity of movement, it sometimes induced his opponents to wait, in a dubious and hesitating posture, for attacks, which, with less apprehension of their antagonist, they would have thought it more prudent to frustrate and to anticipate.

Great sacrifices were necessary to enable the French troops to move with that degree of celerity which Buonaparte's combinations required. He made no allowance for impediments or unexpected obstacles; the time which he had calculated for execution of manœuvres prescribed, was on no account to be exceeded—every sacrifice was to be made of baggage, stragglers, even artillery, rather than the column should arrive too late at the point of its destination. Hence, all that had hitherto been considered as essential not only to the health, but to the very existence of an army, was in a great measure dispensed with in the French service; and, for the first time, troops were seen to take the field without tents, without camp-equipage, without magazines of provisions, without military hospitals;—the soldiers eating as they could, sleeping where they could, dying where they could; but still advancing, still combating, and still victorious.

It is true, that the abandonment of every object, save success in the field, augmented frightfully all the usual horrors of war. The soldier, with arms in his hands, and wanting bread, became a marauder in self-defence; and in supplying his wants by rapine, did mischief to the inhabitants in a degree infinitely beyond the benefit he himself received; for it may be said of military requisition, as truly as of despotism, that it resembles the proceedings of a savage, who cuts down a tree to come at the fruit. Still, though purchased at a high rate, that advantage was gained by this rapid system of tactics, which in a slower progress, during which the soldier was regularly maintained, and kept under the restraint of discipline, might have been rendered doubtful. It wasted the army through disease, fatigue, and all the consequences of want and toil; but still the victory was attained, and that was enough to make the survivors forget their hardships, and to draw forth new recruits to replace the fallen. Patient of labours, light of heart and temper, and elated by success beyond all painful recollections, the French soldiers were the very men calculated to execute this desperate species of service under a chief, who, their sagacity soon discovered, was sure to lead to victory all those, who could sustain the hardships by which it was to be won.

The character of the mountainous countries, among which he was for the first time to exercise his system, was highly favourable to Buonaparte's views. Presenting many lines and defensible positions, it induced the Austrian generals to become stationary, and occupy a considerable extent of ground, according to their old system of tactics. But though abounding in such positions as

might at first sight seem absolutely impregnable, and were too often trusted to as such, the mountains also exhibited to the sagacious eye of a great Captain, gorges, defiles, and difficult and unsuspected points of access, by which he could turn the positions that appeared in front so formidable; and, by threatening them on the flank and on the rear, compel the enemy to a battle at disadvantage, or to a retreat with loss.

The forces which Buonaparte had under his command, were between fifty and sixty thousand good troops, having, many of them, been brought from the Spanish campaign, in consequence of the peace with that country; but very indifferently provided with clothing, and suffering from the hardships they had endured in those mountainous, barren, and cold regions. The cavalry, in particular, were in very poor order; but the nature of their new field of action not admitting of their being much employed, rendered this of less consequence. The misery of the French army, until these Alpine campaigns were victoriously closed by the armistice of Cherasco, could, according to Buonaparte's authority,* scarce bear description. The officers for several years had received no more than eight livres a month (twenty-pence sterling a week) in name of pay, and staff-officers had not amongst them a single horse. Berthier preserved, as a curiosity, an order, dated on the day of the victory of Albenga, which munificently conferred a gratuity of three Louis d'ors upon every general of division.† Among the generals to whom this donation was rendered acceptable by their wants, were, or might have been, many whose names became afterwards the praise and dread of war. Augereau, Massena, Serrurier, Joubert, Lasnes, and Murat, all generals of the first consideration, served under Buonaparte in the Italian campaign.

The position of the French army had repeatedly varied since October 1795, after the skirmish at Cairo. At that time the extreme left of the line, which extended from south to north, rested upon the Col d'Argentine, and communicated with the higher Alps—the centre was on the Col di Tende and Mont Bertrand—the left occupied the heights of Saint Bertrand, Saint Jacques, and other ridges running in the same direction, which terminated on the Mediterranean shore, near Finale.

The Austrians, strongly reinforced, attacked this line, and carried the heights of Mont Saint Jacques; and Kellermann, after a vain attempt to regain that point of his position, retreated to the line of defence more westward, which rests on Borghetto. Kellermann, an active and good brigade officer, but without sufficient talent to act as Commander-in-chief, was superseded, and Scherer was placed in command of the Army of Italy. He risked a battle with the Austrians near Soano, in which the talents of Massena and Augereau were conspicuous; and by the victory which ensued, the French regained the line of Saint Jacques and Finale, which Kellermann had been forced to abandon; so that, in a general point of view, the relative position of the two opposed armies was not very different from that in which they had been left by Buonaparte.

But though Scherer had been thus far victorious, he was not the person to whom the Directory desired to intrust the daring plan of assuming the offensive on a grand scale upon the Alpine frontier, and, by carrying their arms into Italy, compelling the Austrians to defend themselves in that quarter, and to diminish the gigantic efforts which that power had hitherto continued with varied success, but unabated vigour, upon the Rhine. The rulers of France had a farther object in this bold scheme. They desired to intimidate, or annihilate and de-

* *Memoires écrites à St. Helene, sous la dictée de l'Empereur, vol. iii. p. 151.*

† This piece of generosity reminds us of the liberality of the kings of Brentford to their Knightsbridge forces—

First King. Here, take five guineas to these warlike men.

Second King. And here, five more, which makes the sum just ten.

Herald. We have not seen so much the Lord knows when!

throne the Pope. He was odious to them as Head of the Church, because the attachment of the French clergy to the Roman See, and the points of conscience which rested upon that dependence, had occasioned the recusancy of the priests, especially of those who were most esteemed by the people, to take the constitutional oath. To the Pope, and his claims of supremacy, were therefore laid the charge of the great civil war in La Vendée, and the general disaffection of the Catholics in the south of France.

But this was not the only cause of the animosity entertained by the Directory against the Head of the Catholic Church. They had, three years before, sustained an actual injury from the See of Rome, which was yet unavenged. The people of Rome were extremely provoked that the French residing there, and particularly the young artists, had displayed the three-coloured cockade, and were proposing to exhibit the scutcheon containing the emblems of the Republic over the door of the French consul. The Pope, through his minister, had intimated his desire that this should not be attempted, as he had not acknowledged the Republic as a legitimate government. The French, however, pursued their purpose; and the consequence was, that a popular commotion arose, which the Papal troops did not greatly exert themselves to suppress. The carriage of the French Envoy, or *Chargé des Affaires*, named Basseville, was attacked in the streets, and chased home; his house was broken into by the mob, and he himself, unarmed and unresisting, was cruelly assassinated. The French government considered this very naturally as a gross insult, and were the more desirous of avenging it, that by doing so they would approach nearer to the dignified conduct of the Roman Republic, which, in good or evil, seems always to have been their model. The affair happened in 1793, but was not forgotten in 1796.

The original idea entertained by the French government for prosecuting their resentment, had been by a proposed landing at Civita Vecchia with an army of ten thousand men, marching to Rome, and exacting from the Pontiff complete atonement for the murder of Basseville. But as the English fleet rode unopposed in the Mediterranean, it became a matter of very doubtful success to transport such a body of troops to Civita Vecchia by sea, not to mention the chance that, even if safely landed, they would have found themselves in the centre of Italy, cut off from supplies and succours, assaulted on all hands, and most probably blockaded by the British fleet. Buonaparte, who was consulted, recommended that the north of Italy should be first conquered, in order that Rome might be with safety approached and chastised; and this scheme, though in appearance scarce a less bold measure, was a much safer one than the Directory had at first inclined to, since Buonaparte would only approach Rome in the event of his being able to preserve his communications with Lombardy and Tuscany, which he must conquer in the first place.

The plan of crossing the Alps, and marching into Italy, suited in every respect the ambitious and self-confident character of the General to whom it was now intrusted. It gave him a separate and independent authority, and the power of acting on his own judgment and responsibility; for his countryman Salicetti, the deputy who accompanied him as commissioner of the government, was not probably much disposed to intrude his opinions. He had been Buonaparte's patron, and was still his friend. The young General's mind was made up to the alternative of conquest or ruin, as may be judged from his words to a friend at taking leave of him. "In three months," he said, "I will be either at Milan or at Paris;" intimating at once his desperate resolution to succeed, and his sense that the disappointment of all his prospects must be the consequence of a failure.

+ With the same view of animating his followers to ambitious hopes, he addressed the Army of Italy to the following purpose:—"Soldiers, you are hungry and naked—The Republic owes you much, but she has not the means to

acquit herself of her debts. The patience with which you support your hardships among these barren rocks is admirable, but it cannot procure you glory. I am come to lead you into the most fertile plains that the sun beholds—Rich provinces, opulent towns, all shall be at your disposal—Soldiers, with such a prospect before you, can you fail in courage and constancy?" This was showing the deer to the hound when the leash is about to be slipped.

The Austro-Sardinian army, to which Buonaparte was opposed, was commanded by Beaulieu, an Austrian general of great experience and some talent, but no less than seventy-five years old; accustomed all his life to the ancient rules of tactics, and unlikely to suspect, anticipate, or frustrate, those plans, formed by a genius so fertile as that of Napoleon.

Buonaparte's plan for entering Italy differed from that of former conquerors and invaders, who had approached that fine country by penetrating or surmounting at some point or other her Alpine barriers. This inventive warrior resolved to attain the same object, by turning round the southern extremity of the Alpine range, keeping as close as possible to the shores of the Mediterranean, and passing through the Genoese territory by the narrow pass called the Bocchetta, leading around the extremity of the mountains, and betwixt these and the sea. Thus he proposed to penetrate into Italy by the lowest level which the surface of the country presented, which must be of course where the range of the Alps unites with that of the Appenines. The point of junction where these two immense ranges of mountains touch upon each other, is at the heights of Mount Saint Jacques, above Genoa, where the Alps, running north-westward, ascend to Mont Blanc, their highest peak, and the Appenines, running to the south-east, gradually elevate themselves to Monte Velino, the tallest mountain of the range.

To attain his object of turning the Alps in the manner proposed, it was necessary that Buonaparte should totally change the situation of his army; those occupying a defensive line, running north and south, being to assume an offensive position, extending east and west. Speaking of an army as of a battalion, he was to form into column upon the right of the line which he had hitherto occupied. This was an extremely delicate operation, to be undertaken in presence of an active enemy, his superior in numbers; nor was he permitted to execute it uninterrupted.

No sooner did Beaulieu learn that the French general was concentrating his forces, and about to change his position, than he hastened to preserve Genoa, without possession of which, or at least of the adjacent territory, Buonaparte's scheme of advance could scarce have been accomplished. The Austrian divided his army into three bodies. Colli, at the head of a Sardinian division, he stationed on the extreme right at Ceva; his centre division, under D'Argenteau, having its head at Sasiello, had directions to march on a mountain called Monte Notte, with two villages of the same name, near to which was a strong position at a place called Montelegino, which the French had occupied in order to cover their flank during their march towards the east. At the head of his left wing, Beaulieu himself moved from Novi upon Voltri, a small town within ten miles of Genoa, for the protection of that ancient city, whose independence and neutrality were like to be held in little reverence. Thus it appears, that while the French were endeavouring to penetrate into Italy by an advance from Sardinia by the way of Genoa, their line of march was threatened by three armies of Austro-Sardinians, descending from the skirts of the Alps, and menacing to attack their flank. But, though a skilful disposition, Beaulieu's had, from the very mountainous character of the country, the great disadvantage of wanting connexion between the three separate divisions; neither, if needful, could they be easily united on any point desired, while the lower line, on which the French moved, permitted constant communication and co-operation.

On the 10th of April 1796, D'Argenteau, with the central division of the

Austro-Sardinian army, descended upon Monte Notte, while Beaulieu on the left attacked the van of the French army, which had come as far as Voltri. General Cervoni, commanding the French division which sustained the attack of Beaulieu, was compelled to fall back on the main body of his countrymen; and had the assault of D'Argenteau been equally animated, or equally successful, the fame of Buonaparte might have been stifled in the birth. But Colonel Rampon, a French officer, who commanded the redoubts near Montelegino, stopped the progress of D'Argenteau by the most determined resistance. At the head of not more than fifteen hundred men, whom he inspired with his own courage, and caused to swear either to maintain their post or die there, he continued to defend the redoubts, during the whole of the 11th, until D'Argenteau, whose conduct was afterwards greatly blamed for not making more determined efforts to carry them, drew off his forces for the evening, intending to renew the attack next morning.

But on the morning of the 12th, the Austrian general found himself surrounded with enemies. Cervoni, who retreated before Beaulieu, had united himself with La Harpe, and both advancing northward during the night of the 11th, established themselves in the rear of the redoubts of Montelegino, which Rampon had so gallantly defended. This was not all. The divisions of Augereau and Massena had marched, by different routes, on the flank and on the rear of D'Argenteau's column; so that next morning, instead of renewing his attack on the redoubts, the Austrian general was obliged to extricate himself by a disastrous retreat, leaving behind him colours and cannon, a thousand slain, and two thousand prisoners.

Such was the battle of Monte Notte, the first of Buonaparte's victories; eminently displaying that truth and mathematical certainty of combination, which enabled him on many more memorable occasions, even when his forces were inferior in numbers, and apparently disunited in position, suddenly to concentrate them and defeat his enemy, by overpowering him on the very point where he thought himself strongest. He had accumulated a superior force on the Austrian centre, and destroyed it, while Colli, on the right, and Beaulieu himself, on the left, each at the head of numerous forces, did not even hear of the action till it was fought and won.

In consequence of the success at Monte Notte, and the close pursuit of the defeated Austrians, the French obtained possession of Cairo, which placed them on that side of the Alps which slopes towards Lombardy, and where the streams from these mountains run to join the Po.

Beaulieu had advanced to Voltri, while the French withdrew to unite themselves in the attack upon D'Argenteau. He had now to retreat northward with all haste to Dego, in the valley of the river Bormida, in order to resume communication with the left wing of his army, consisting chiefly of Sardinians, from which he was now nearly separated by the defeat of the centre. General Colli, by a corresponding movement on the left, occupied Millesimo, a small town about nine miles from Dego, with which he resumed and maintained communication by a brigade stationed on the heights of Biastro. From the strength of this position, though his forces were scarce sufficiently concentrated, Beaulieu hoped to maintain his ground till he should receive supplies from Lombardy, and recover the consequences of the defeat at Monte Notte. But the antagonist whom he had in front had no purpose of permitting him such respite.

Determined upon a general attack on all points of the Austrian position, the French army advanced in three bodies upon a space of four leagues in extent. Augereau, at the head of the division which had not fought at Monte Notte, advanced on the left against Millesimo; the centre, under Massena, directed themselves upon Dego, by the vale of the Bormida; the right wing, commanded by La Harpe, manœuvred on the right of all, for the purpose of turning Beau-

lieu's left flank. Augereau was the first who came in contact with the enemy. He attacked General Colli on the 13th April. His troops, emulous of the honour acquired by their companions, behaved with great bravery, rushed upon the outposts of the Sardinian army at Millesimo, forced, and retained possession of the gorge by which it was defended, and thus separated from the Sardinian army a body of about two thousand men, under the Austrian General Provera, who occupied a detached eminence called Cossaria, which covered the extreme left of General Colli's position. But the Austrian showed the most obstinate courage. Although surrounded by the enemy, he threw himself into the ruinous castle of Cossaria, which crowned the eminence, and showed a disposition to maintain the place to the last; the rather that, as he could see from the turrets of his stronghold the Sardinian troops, from whom he had been separated, preparing to fight on the ensuing day, he might reasonably hope to be disengaged.

Buonaparte in person came up; and seeing the necessity of dislodging the enemy from this strong post, ordered three successive attacks to be made on the castle. Joubert, at the head of one of the attacking columns, had actually, with six or seven others, made his way into the outworks, when he was struck down by a wound in the head. General Banal and Adjutant-general Quenin fell, each at the head of the column which he commanded; and Buonaparte was compelled to leave the obstinate Provera in possession of the castle for the night. The morning of the 14th brought a different scene. Contenting himself with blockading the castle of Cossaria, Buonaparte now gave battle to General Colli, who made every effort to relieve it. These attempts were all in vain. He was defeated and cut off from Beaulieu; he retired as well as he could upon Ceva, leaving to his fate the brave General Provera, who was compelled to surrender at discretion.

On the same day, Massena, with the centre, attacked the heights of Biastro, being the point of communication betwixt Beaulieu and Colli, while La Harpe, having crossed the Bormida, where the stream came up to the soldiers' middle, attacked in front and in flank the village of Dego, where the Austrian commander-in-chief was stationed. The first attack was completely successful,—the heights of Biastro were carried, and the Piedmontese routed. The assault of Dego was not less so, although after a harder struggle. Beaulieu was compelled to retreat, and was entirely separated from the Sardinians, who had hitherto acted in combination with him. The defenders of Italy now retreated in different directions, Colli moving westward towards Ceva, while Beaulieu, closely pursued through a difficult country, retired upon D'Aqui.

Even the morning after the victory, it was nearly wrested out of the hands of the conquerors. A fresh division of Austrians, who had evacuated Voltri later than the others, and were approaching to form a junction with their general, found the enemy in possession of Beaulieu's position. They arrived at Dego like men who had been led astray, and were no doubt surprised at finding it in the hands of the French. Yet they did not hesitate to assume the offensive, and by a brisk attack drove out the enemy, and replaced the Austrian eagles in the village. Great alarm was occasioned by this sudden apparition; for no one among the French could conceive the meaning of an alarm beginning on the opposite quarter to that on which the enemy had retreated, and without its being announced from the out-posts towards D'Aqui.

Buonaparte hastily marched on the village. The Austrians repelled two attacks; at the third, General Lanusse, afterwards killed in Egypt, put his hat upon the point of his sword, and advancing to the charge, penetrated into the place. Lannes also, afterwards Duke of Montebello, distinguished himself on the same occasion by courage and military skill, and was recommended by Buonaparte to the Directory for promotion. In this battle of Dego, more commonly called of Millesimo, the Austro-Sardinian army lost five or six thousand men, thirty pieces of cannon, with a great quantity of baggage. Besides, the

Austrians were divided from the Sardinians; and the two generals began to show, not only that their forces were disunited, but that they themselves were acting upon separate motives; the Sardinians desiring to protect Turin, whereas the movements of Beaulieu seemed still directed to prevent the French from entering the Milanese territory.

Leaving a sufficient force on the Bormida to keep in check Beaulieu, Buonaparte now turned his strength against Colli, who, overpowered, and without hopes of succour, abandoned his line of defence near Ceva, and retreated to the line of the Tanaro.

Napoleon in the meantime fixed his head-quarters at Ceva, and enjoyed from the heights of Montezemoto, the splendid view of the fertile fields of Piedmont stretching in boundless perspective beneath his feet, watered by the Po, the Tanaro, and a thousand other streams which descend from the Alps. Before the eyes of the delighted army of victors lay this rich expanse like a promised land; behind them was the wilderness they had passed;—not indeed a desert of barren sand, similar to that in which the Israelites wandered, but a huge tract of rocks and inaccessible mountains, crested with ice and snow, seeming by nature designed as the barrier and rampart of the blessed regions, which stretched eastward beneath them. We can sympathize with the self-congratulation of the General who had surmounted such tremendous obstacles in a way so unusual. He said to the officers around him, as they gazed upon this magnificent scene, “Hannibal took the Alps by storm. We have succeeded as well by turning their flank.”

The dispirited army of Colli was attacked at Mondovi during his retreat, by two corps of Buonaparte's army, from two different points, commanded by Massena and Serrurier. The last general, the Sardinian repulsed with loss; but when he found Massena, in the meantime, was turning the left of his line, and that he was thus pressed on both flanks, his situation became almost desperate. The cavalry of the Piedmontese made an effort to renew the combat. For a time they overpowered and drove back those of the French; and General Stengel, who commanded the latter, was slain in attempting to get them into order. But the desperate valour of Murat, unrivalled perhaps in the heady charge of cavalry combat, renewed the fortune of the field; and the horse, as well as the infantry of Colli's army, were compelled to a disastrous retreat. The defeat was decisive; and the Sardinians, after the loss of the best of their troops, their cannon, baggage, and appointments, and being now totally divided from their Austrian allies, and liable to be overpowered by the united forces of the French army, had no longer hopes of effectually covering Turin. Buonaparte, pursuing his victory, took possession of Cherasco, within ten leagues of the Piedmontese capital.

Thus Fortune, in the course of a campaign of scarce a month, placed her favourite in full possession of the desired road to Italy, by command of the mountain-passes, which had been invaded and conquered with so much military skill. He had gained three battles over forces far superior to his own; inflicted on the enemy a loss of twenty-five thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners; taken eighty pieces of cannon, and twenty-one stand of colours; reduced to inaction the Austrian army; almost annihilated that of Sardinia; and stood in full communication with France upon the eastern side of the Alps, with Italy lying open before him, as if to invite his invasion. But it was not even with such laurels, and with facilities which now presented themselves for the accomplishment of new and more important victories upon a larger scale, and with more magnificent results, that the career of Buonaparte's earliest campaign was to be closed. The head of the royal House of Savoy, if not one of the most powerful, still one of the most distinguished in Europe, was to have the melancholy experience, that he had encountered with the Man of Destiny,

as he was afterwards proudly called, who, for a time, had power, in the emphatic phrase of Scripture, "to bind kings with chains, and nobles with fetters of iron."

The shattered relics of the Sardinian army had fallen back, or rather fled, to within two leagues of Turin, without hope of being again able to make an effectual stand. The Sovereign of Sardinia, Savoy, and Piedmont, had no means of preserving his capital, nay, his existence on the continent, excepting by an almost total submission to the will of the victor. Let it be remembered, that Victor Amadeus the Third was the descendant of a race of heroes, who, from the peculiar situation of their territories, as constituting a neutral ground of great strength betwixt France and the Italian possessions of Austria, had often been called on to play a part in the general affairs of Europe, of importance far superior to that which their condition as a second-rate power could otherwise have demanded. In general, they had compensated their inferiority of force by an ability and gallantry which did them the highest credit, both as generals and as politicians; and now Piedmont was at the feet, in her turn, of an enemy weaker in numbers than her own. Besides the reflections on the past fame of his country, the present humiliating situation of the King was rendered more mortifying by the state of his family connexions. Victor Amadeus was the father-in-law of Monsieur (by right Louis XVIII.), and of the Comte d'Artois (the reigning King of France). He had received his sons-in-law at his court at Turin, had afforded them an opportunity of assembling around them their forces, consisting of the emigrant noblesse, and had strained all the power he possessed, and in many instances successfully, to withstand both the artifices and the arms of the French Republicans. And now, so born, so connected, and with such principles, he was condemned to sue for peace on any terms which might be dictated, from a General of France aged twenty-six years, who, a few months before, was desirous of an appointment in the artillery service of the Grand Seigneur!

An armistice was requested by the King of Sardinia under these afflicting circumstances, but could only be purchased by placing two of his strongest fortresses,—those keys of the Alps, of which his ancestors had long been the keepers,—Coni and Tortona, in the hands of the French, and thus acknowledging that he surrendered at discretion. The armistice was agreed on at Cherasco, but commissioners were sent by the King to Paris, to arrange with the Directory the final terms of peace. These were such as victors give to the vanquished.

Besides the fortresses already surrendered, the King of Sardinia was to place in the hands of the French five others of the first importance. The road from France to Italy was to be at all times open to the French armies; and indeed the king, by surrender of the places mentioned, had lost the power of interrupting their progress. He was to break off every species of alliance and connexion with the combined powers at war with France, and become bound not to entertain at his court, or in his service, any French emigrants whatsoever, or any of their connexions; nor was an exception even made in favour of his own two daughters. In short, the surrender was absolute. Victor Amadeus exhibited the utmost reluctance to subscribe this treaty, and did not long survive it. His son succeeded in name to the kingdom of Piedmont; but the fortresses and passes, which had rendered him a prince of some importance, were, excepting Turin, and one or two of minor consequence, all surrendered into the hands of the French.

Viewing this treaty with Sardinia as the close of the Piedmontese campaign, we pause to consider the character which Buonaparte displayed at that period. The talents as a general which he had exhibited, were of the very first order. There was no disconnexion in his objects, they were all attained by the very means he proposed, and the success was improved to the utmost. A different

conduct usually characterizes those who stumble unexpectedly on victory, either by good fortune or by the valour of their troops. When the favourable opportunity occurs to such leaders, they are nearly as much embarrassed by it as by a defeat. But Buonaparte, who had foreseen the result of each operation by his sagacity, stood also prepared to make the most of the advantages which might be derived from it.

His style in addressing the Convention was, at this period, more modest and simple, and therefore more impressive, than the figurative and bombastic style which he afterwards used in his bulletins. His self-opinion, perhaps, was not risen so high as to permit him to use the sesquipedalian words and violent metaphors, to which he afterwards seems to have given a preference. We may remark also, that the young victor was honourably anxious to secure for such officers as distinguished themselves, the preferment which their services entitled them to. He urges the promotion of his brethren in arms in almost every one of his despatches,—a conduct not only just and generous, but also highly politic. Were his recommendations successful, their General had the gratitude due for the benefit; were they overlooked, thanks equally belonged to him for his good wishes, and the resentment for the slight attached itself to the government, who did not give effect to them.

If Buonaparte spoke simply and modestly on his own achievements, the bombast which he spared was liberally dealt out to the Convention by an orator named Daubermesnil, who invokes all bards, from Tyrtæus and Ossian down to the author of the Marseillois hymn—all painters, from Apelles to David—all musicians, from Orpheus to the author of the *Chant du depart*, to sing, paint, and compose music, upon the achievements of the General and Army of Italy.

With better taste, a medal of Buonaparte was struck in the character of the Conqueror of the battle of Monte Notte. The face is extremely thin, with lank hair, a striking contrast to the fleshy square countenance exhibited on his later coins. On the reverse, Victory, bearing a palm branch, a wreath of laurel, and a naked sword, is seen flying over the Alps. This medal we notice as the first of the splendid series which records the victories and honours of Napoleon, and which was designed by Denon as a tribute to the genius of his patron.

CHAPTER XXI.

Further progress of the French Army under Buonaparte—He crosses the Po, at Placenza, on 7th May.—Battle of Lodi takes place on the 10th, in which the French are victorious.—Remarks on Napoleon's Tactics in this celebrated Action.—French take possession of Cremona and Pixrightone.—Milan deserted by the Archduke Ferdinand and his Duchess.—Buonaparte enters Milan on the 14th May—General situation of the Italian States at this period.—Napoleon inflicts fines upon the neutral and unoffending States of Parma and Modena, and extorts the surrender of some of their finest Pictures.—Remarks upon this novel procedure.

THE ardent disposition of Buonaparte did not long permit him to rest after the advantages which he had secured. He had gazed on Italy with an eagle's eye; but it was only for a moment, ere stooping on her with the wing, and pouncing on her with the talons, of the king of birds.

A general with less extraordinary talent would perhaps have thought it sufficient to have obtained possession of Piedmont, revolutionizing its government as the French had done that of Holland, and would have awaited fresh supplies and reinforcements from France before advancing to farther and more distant conquests, and leaving the Alps under the dominion of a hostile, though for the

present a subdued and disarmed monarchy. But Buonaparte had studied the campaign of Villars in these regions, and was of opinion that it was by that general's hesitation to advance boldly into Italy, after the victories which the Marshal de Coigni had obtained at Parma and Guastalla, that the enemy had been enabled to assemble an accumulating force, before which the French were compelled to retreat. He determined, therefore, to give the Republic of Venice, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and other States in Italy, no time to muster forces, and take a decided part, as they were likely to do, to oppose a French invasion. Their terror and surprise could not fail to be increased by a sudden irruption; while months, weeks, even days of consideration, might afford those States, attached as the rulers must be to their ancient oligarchical forms of government, time and composure to assume arms to maintain them. A speedy resolution was the more necessary, as Austria, alarmed for her Italian possessions, was about to make every effort for their defence. Orders had already been sent by the Aulic Council of War to detach an army of thirty thousand men, under Wurmser, from the Army of the Rhine to the frontiers of Italy. These were to be strengthened by other reinforcements from the interior, and by such forces as could be raised in the mountainous district of the Tyrol, which furnishes perhaps the most experienced and most formidable sharp-shooters in the world. The whole was to be united to the fragments of Beaulieu's defeated troops. If suffered to form a junction, and arrange their plans for attack or defence, an army, of force so superior to the French in numbers, veterans in discipline, and commanded by a general like Wurmser, was likely to prevent all the advantages which the French might gain by a sudden irruption, ere an opposition so formidable was collected and organized. But the daring scheme which Napoleon contemplated, corresponding to the genius of him who had formed it, required to be executed with caution, united with secrecy and celerity. These were the more necessary, as, although the thanks of the French government had been voted to the Army of Italy five times in the course of a month, yet the Directory, alarmed at the more doubtful state of hostilities upon the Rhine, had turned their exertions chiefly in that direction; and, trusting to the skill of their General, and the courage of his troops, had not transmitted recruits and supplies upon the scale necessary for the great undertakings which he meditated. But *Italiam—Italiam!**—the idea of penetrating into a country so guarded and defended by nature, as well as by military skill, the consciousness of having surmounted obstacles of a nature so extraordinary, and the hope that they were approaching the reward of so many labours—above all, their full confidence in a leader, who seemed to have bound Victory to his standard—made the soldiers follow their general, without counting their own deficiencies, or the enemy's numbers.

To encourage this ardour, Buonaparte circulated an address, in which, complimenting the army on the victories they had gained, he desired them at the same time to consider nothing as won so long as the Austrians held Milan, and while the ashes of those who had conquered the Tarquins were soiled by the presence of the assassins of Basseville. It would appear that classical allusions are either familiar to the French soldiers, or that, without being more learned than others of their rank, they are pleased with being supposed to understand them. They probably considered the oratory of their great leader as soldier-like words, and words of exceeding good command. The English soldier, addressed in such flights of eloquence, would either have laughed at them, or supposed that he had got a crazed play-actor put over him, instead of a general. But there is this peculiar trait in the French character, that they are willing to take everything of a complimentary kind in the manner in which it seems to be

* *Italiam, Italiam!* primus conclamat Achates;
Italiam socii, magno clamore, salutant.

meant. They appear to have made that bargain with themselves on many points, which the audience usually do in a theatre,—to accept of the appearance of things for the reality. They never inquire whether a triumphal arch is of stone or of wood; whether a scutcheon is of solid metal, or only gilt; or whether a speech, of which the tendency is flattering to their national vanity, contains genuine eloquence, or only tumid extravagance.

All thoughts were therefore turned to Italy. The fortress of Tortona was surrendered to the French by the King of Sardinia; Buonaparte's head-quarters were fixed there. Massena concentrated another part of the army at Alexandria, menacing Milan, and threatening, by the passage of the Po, to invade the territories belonging to Austria on the northern bank of that river. As Buonaparte himself observed, the passage of a great river is one of the most critical operations in modern war; and Beaulieu had collected his forces to cover Milan, and prevent the French, if possible, from crossing the Po. But, in order to avert the dangerous consequences of attempting to force his passage on the river, defended by a formidable enemy in front, Buonaparte's subtle genius had already prepared the means for deceiving the old Austrian respecting his intended operations.

Valenza appeared to be the point of passage proposed by the French; it is one of those fortresses which cover the eastern frontier of Piedmont, and is situated upon the river Po. During the conferences previous to the armistice of the Cherasco, Buonaparte had thrown out hints as if he were particularly desirous to be possessed of this place, and it was actually stipulated in the terms of the treaty, that the French should occupy it for the purpose of effecting their passage over the river. Beaulieu did not fail to learn what had passed, which coinciding with his own ideas of the rout by which Buonaparte meant to advance upon Milan, he hastened to concentrate his army on the opposite bank, at a place called Valeggio, about eighteen miles from Valenza, the point near which he expected the attempt to be made, and from which he could move easily in any direction towards the river, before the French could send over any considerable force. Massena also countenanced this report, and riveted the attention of the Austrians on Valenza, by pushing strong reconnoitring parties from Alexandria in the direction of that fortress. Besides, Beaulieu had himself crossed the Po at this place, and, like all men of routine, (for such he was, though a brave and approved soldier,) he was always apt to suppose that the same reasons which directed himself, must needs seem equally convincing to others. In almost all delicate affairs, persons of ordinary talents are misled by their incapacity to comprehend, that men of another disposition will be likely to view circumstances, and act upon principles, with an eye and opinion very different from their own.

But the reports which induced the Austrian general to take the position at Valeggio, arose out of a stratagem of war. It was never Buonaparte's intention to cross the Po at Valenza. The proposal was a feint to draw Beaulieu's attention to that point, while the French accomplished the desired passage at Placenza, nearly fifty miles lower down the river than Valeggio, where their subtle General had induced the Austrians to take up their line of defence. Marching for this purpose with incredible celerity, Buonaparte, on the 7th of May, assembled his forces at Placenza, when their presence was least expected, and where there were none to defend the opposite bank, except two or three squadrons of Austrians, stationed there merely for the purpose of reconnoitring. General Andreossi (for names distinguished during these dreadful wars begin to rise on the narrative, as the stars glimmer out on the horizon) commanded an advanced guard of five hundred men. They had to pass in the common ferry-boats, and the crossing required nearly half an hour; so that the difficulty, or rather impossibility, of achieving the operation, had they been seriously opposed, appears to demonstration. Colonel Lannes threw himself ashore first with a

body of grenadiers, and speedily dispersed the Austrian hussars, who attempted to resist their landing. The vanguard having thus opened the passage, the other divisions of the army were enabled to cross in succession, and in the course of two days the whole were in the Milanese territory, and on the left bank of the Po. The military manœuvres, by means of which Buonaparte achieved, without the loss of a man, an operation of so much consequence, and which, without such address as he displayed, must have been attended with great loss, and risk of failure, have often been considered as among his most masterly movements.

Beaulieu, informed too late of the real plans of the French general, moved his advanced guard, composed of the division of General Liptay, from Valeggio towards the Po, in the direction of Placenza. But here also the alert general of the French had been too rapid in his movements for the aged German. Buonaparte had no intention to wait an attack from the enemy with such a river as the Po in his rear, which he had no means of recrossing if the day should go against him; so that a defeat, or even a material check, would have endangered the total loss of his army. He was, therefore, pushing forward in order to gain ground on which to manœuvre, and the advanced divisions of the two armies met at a village called Fombio, not far from Casal, on the 8th of May. The Austrians threw themselves into the place, fortified and manned the steeples, and whatever posts else could be made effectual for defence, and reckoned upon defending themselves there until the main body of Beaulieu's army should come up to support them. But they were unable to sustain the vivacity of the French onset, to which so many successive victories had now given a double impulse. The village was carried at the bayonet's point; the Austrians lost their cannon, and left behind one-third of their men, in slain, wounded, and prisoners. The wreck of Liptay's division saved themselves by crossing the Adda at Pizzighitone, while they protected their retreat by a hasty defence of that fortress.

Another body of Austrians having advanced from Casal, to support, it may be supposed, the division of Liptay, occasioned a great loss to the French army in the person of a very promising officer. This was General La Harpe, highly respected and trusted by Buonaparte, and repeatedly mentioned in the campaigns of Piedmont. Hearing the alarm given by the outposts, when the Austrian patrols came in contact with them, La Harpe rode out to satisfy himself concerning the nature and strength of the attacking party. On his return to his own troops, they mistook him and his attendants for the enemy, fired upon, and killed him. He was a Swiss by birth, and had been compelled to leave his country on account of his democratical opinions; a grenadier, says Buonaparte, in stature and in courage, but of a restless disposition. The soldiers, with the superstition belonging to their profession, remarked, that during the battle of Fombio, on the day before, he was less animated than usual, as if an obscure sense of his approaching fate already overwhelmed him.

The Austrian regiment of cavalry which occasioned this loss, after some skirmishing, was content to escape to Lodi, a point upon which Beaulieu was again collecting his scattered forces, for the purpose of covering Milan, by protecting the line of the Adda.

"The passage of the Po," said Buonaparte, in his report to the Directory, "had been expected to prove the most bold and difficult manœuvre of the campaign, nor did we expect to have an action of more vivacity than that of Dego. But we have now to recount the battle of Lodi." As the conqueror deservedly congratulated himself on this hard-won victory, and as it has become in a manner especially connected with his name and military character, we must, according to our plan, be somewhat minute in our details respecting it.

The Adda, a large and deep river, though fordable at some places and in some seasons, crosses the valley of the Milanese, rising and joining the Po at

Pizzighitone; so that, if the few places at which it can be crossed are fortified or defended, it forms a line covering all the Milanese territory to the eastward, from any force approaching from the direction of Piedmont. This line Beaulieu proposed to make good against the victor before whom he had so often retreated, and he conjectured (on this occasion rightly) that, to prosecute his victory by marching upon Milan, Buonaparte would first desire to dislodge the covering army from the line of the Adda, as he could not safely advance to the capital of Lombardy, leaving the enemy in possession of such a defensive line upon their flank. He also conjectured that this attempt would be made at Lodi.

This is a large town, containing twelve thousand inhabitants. It has old Gothic walls, but its chief defence consists in the river Adda, which flows through it, and is crossed by a wooden bridge about five hundred feet in length. When Beaulieu, after the affair of Fombio, evacuated Casal, he retreated to this place with about ten thousand men. The rest of his army was directed upon Milan and Cassano, a town situated, like Lodi, upon the Adda.

Buonaparte calculated that, if he could accomplish the passage of the Adda at Lodi, he might overtake and disperse the remainder of Beaulieu's army, without allowing the veteran time to concentrate them for farther resistance in Milan, or even for rallying under the walls of the strong fortress of Mantua. The judgment of the French General was in war not more remarkable for seizing the most advantageous moment of attack, than for availing himself to the very uttermost of victory when obtained. The quick-sighted faculty and power of instant decision with which nature had endowed him, had, it may be supposed, provided beforehand for the consequences of the victory ere it was yet won, and left no room for doubt or hesitation when his hopes had become certainties. We have already remarked, that there have been many commanders, who, after an accidental victory, are so much at a loss what is next to be done, that while they are hesitating, the golden moments pass away unimproved; but Buonaparte knew as well how to use, as how to obtain advantages.

Upon the 10th day of May, attended by his best generals, and heading the choicest of his troops, Napoleon pressed forward towards Lodi. About a league from Casal, he encountered the Austrian rear-guard, who had been left, it would appear, at too great a distance from their main body. The French had no difficulty in driving these troops before them into the town of Lodi, which was but slightly defended by the few soldiers whom Beaulieu had left on the western or right side of the Adda. He had also neglected to destroy the bridge, although he ought rather to have supported a defence on the right bank of the river, (for which the town afforded many facilities,) till the purpose of destruction was completed, than have allowed it to exist. If his rear-guard had been actually stationed in Lodi, instead of being so far in the rear of the main body, they might, by a protracted resistance from the old walls and houses, have given time for this necessary act of demolition.

But though the bridge was left standing, it was swept by twenty or thirty Austrian pieces of artillery, whose thunders menaced death to any who should attempt that pass of peril. The French, with great alertness, got as many guns in position on the left bank, and answered this tremendous fire with equal spirit. During this cannonade, Buonaparte threw himself personally amongst the fire, in order to station two guns loaded with grape-shot in such a position, as rendered it impossible for any one to approach for the purpose of undermining or destroying the bridge; and then calmly proceeded to make arrangements for a desperate attempt.

His cavalry was directed to cross, if possible, at a place where the Adda was said to be fordable,—a task which they accomplished with difficulty. Meantime Napoleon observed that the Austrian line of infantry was thrown considerably behind the batteries of artillery which they supported, in order that they

might have the advantage of a bending slope of ground, which afforded them shelter from the French fire. He, therefore, drew up a close column of three thousand grenadiers, protected from the artillery of the Austrians by the walls and houses of the town, and yet considerably nearer to the enemy's line of guns on the opposite side of the Adda than were their own infantry, which ought to have protected them. The column of grenadiers, thus secured, waited in comparative safety, until the appearance of the French cavalry, who had crossed the ford, began to disquiet the flank of the Austrians. This was the critical moment which Buonaparte expected. A single word of command wheeled the head of the column of grenadiers to the left, and placed it on the perilous bridge. The word was given to advance, and they rushed on with loud shouts of *Vive la République!* But their appearance upon the bridge was the signal for a redoubled shower of grape-shot, while, from the windows of the houses on the left side of the river, the soldiers who occupied them poured volley after volley of musketry on the thick column, as it endeavoured to force its way over the long bridge. At one time the French grenadiers, unable to sustain this dreadful storm, appeared for an instant to hesitate. But Berthier, the chief of Buonaparte's staff, with Massena, L'Allemagne, and Corvini, hurried to the head of the column, and by their presence and gallantry renewed the resolution of the soldiers, who now poured across the bridge. The Austrians had but one resource left; to rush on the French with the bayonet, and kill, or drive back into the Adda, those who had forced their passage, before they could deploy into line, or receive support from their comrades, who were still filing along the bridge. But the opportunity was neglected, either because the troops, who should have executed the manœuvre, had been, as we have already noticed, withdrawn too far from the river; or because the soldiery, as happens when they repose too much confidence in a strong position, became panic-struck when they saw it unexpectedly carried. Or it may be, that General Beaulieu, so old and so unfortunate, had somewhat lost that energy and presence of mind which the critical moment demanded. Whatever was the cause, the French rushed on the artillerymen, from whose fire they had lately suffered so tremendously, and, unsupported as they were, had little difficulty in bayoneting them.

The Austrian army now completely gave way, and lost in their retreat, annoyed as it was by the French cavalry, upwards of twenty guns, a thousand prisoners, and perhaps two thousand more wounded and slain.

Such was the famous passage of the Bridge of Lodi; achieved with such skill and gallantry, as gave the victor the same character for fearless intrepidity, and practical talent in actual battle, which the former part of the campaign had gained him as a most able tactician.

Yet this action, though successful, has been severely criticised by those who desire to derogate from Buonaparte's military talents. It has been said, that he might have passed over a body of infantry at the same ford where the cavalry had crossed; and that thus, by manœuvring on both sides of the river, he might have compelled the Austrians to evacuate their position on the left bank of the Adda, without hazarding an attack upon their front, which could not but cost the assailants very dearly.

Buonaparte had perhaps this objection in his recollection when he states, that the column of grenadiers were so judiciously sheltered from the fire until the moment when their wheel to the left brought them on the bridge, that they only lost two hundred men during the storm of the passage. We cannot but suppose, that this is a very mitigated account of the actual loss of the French army. So slight a loss is not to be easily reconciled with the horrors of the battle, as he himself detailed them in his despatches; nor with the conclusion, in which he mentions, that of the sharp contests which the Army of Italy had to sustain during the campaign, none was to be compared with that "terrible passage of the Bridge of Lodi."

In fact, as we may take occasion to prove hereafter, the Memoranda of the great General, dictated to his officers at Saint Helena, have a little too much the character of his original bulletins; and, while they show a considerable disposition to exaggerate the difficulties to be overcome, the fury of the conflict, and the exertions of courage by which the victory was attained, shew a natural inconsistency, from the obvious wish to diminish the loss which was its unavoidable price.

But admitting that the loss of the French had been greater on this occasion than their General cared to recollect or acknowledge, his military conduct seems not the less justifiable.

Buonaparte appears to have had two objects in view in this daring exploit. The first was, to improve and increase the terror into which his previous successes had thrown the Austrians, and to impress on them the conviction, that no position, however strong, was able to protect them against the audacity and talent of the French. This discouraging feeling, exemplified by so many defeats, and now by one in circumstances where the Austrians appeared to have every advantage, it was natural to suppose, would hurry Beaulieu's retreat, induce him to renounce all subsequent attempts to cover Milan, and rather to reunite the fragments of his army, particularly that part of Liptay's division, which, after being defeated at Fombio, had thrown themselves into Pizzighitone. To have manœuvred slowly and cautiously, would not have struck that terror and confusion which was inspired by the desperate attack on the position at Lodi. In this point the victor perfectly succeeded; for Beaulieu, after his misadventure, drew off without any farther attempt to protect the ancient capital of Lombardy, and threw himself upon Mantua, with the intention of covering that strong fortress, and at the same time of sheltering under it the remains of his army, until he could form a junction with the forces which Wurmser was bringing to his assistance from the Rhine.

Buonaparte himself has pointed out a second object, in which he was less successful. He had hoped the rapid surprise of the Bridge of Lodi might enable him to overtake or intercept the rest of Beaulieu's army, which, as we have said, had retreated by Cassano. He failed, indeed, in this object; for these forces also made their way into the Mantuan territory, and joined Beaulieu, who, by crossing the classical Mincio, placed another strong line of military defence betwixt him and his victor. But the prospect of intercepting and destroying so large a force, was worth the risk he encountered at Lodi, especially taking into view the spirit which his army had acquired from a long train of victory, together with the discouragement which had crept into the Austrian ranks from a uniform series of defeats.

It should also be remembered, in considering the necessity of forcing the bridge of Lodi, that the ford over the Adda was crossed with difficulty even by the cavalry, and that when once separated by the river, the communication between the main army and the detachment of infantry, (which his censors say Napoleon should have sent across in the same manner,) being in a great degree interrupted, the latter might have been exposed to losses, from which Buonaparte, situated as he was on the right bank, could have had no means of protecting them.

Leaving the discussion of what might have been, to trace that which actually took place, the French cavalry pursued the retreating Austrians as far as Cremona, of which they took possession. Pizzighitone was obliged to capitulate, the garrison being cut off from all possibility of succour. About five hundred prisoners surrendered in that fortress; the rest of Liptay's division, and other Austrian corps, could no otherwise escape, than by throwing themselves into the Venetian territory.

It was at this time that Buonaparte had some conversation with an old Hungarian officer made prisoner in one of the actions, whom he met with at a bi-

vouac by chance, and who did not know him. The veteran's language was a curious commentary on the whole campaign; nay, upon Buonaparte's general system of warfare, which appeared so extraordinary to those who had long practised the art on more formal principles. "Things are going on as ill and as irregularly as possible," said the old martinet. "The French have got a young general, who knows nothing of the regular rules of war; he is sometimes on our front, sometimes on the flank, sometimes on the rear. There is no supporting such a gross violation of rules." This somewhat resembles the charge which foreign tacticians have brought against the English, that they gained victories by continuing, with their insular ignorance and obstinacy, to fight on, long after the period when, if they had known the rules of war, they ought to have considered themselves as completely defeated.

A peculiar circumstance is worth mentioning. The French soldiers had a mode at that time of amusing themselves, by conferring an imaginary rank upon their generals, when they had done some remarkable exploit. They showed their sense of the bravery displayed by Buonaparte at the Battle of Lodi, by creating him a corporal; and by this phrase, of the Little Corporal, he was distinguished in the intrigues formed against him, as well as those which were carried on in his favour; in the language of George Cadoudal, who laid a scheme for assassinating him, and in the secret consultation of the old soldiers and others, who arranged his return from Elba.

We are now to turn for a time from war to its consequences, which possess an interest of a nature different from the military events we have been detailing. The movements which had taken place since the King of Sardinia's defeat, had struck terror into the government of Milan, and the Archduke Ferdinand, by whom Austrian Lombardy was governed. But while Beaulieu did his best to cover the capital by force of arms, the measures resorted to by the government were rather of a devotional than warlike character. Processions were made, relics exposed, and rites resorted to, which the Catholic religion prescribes as an appeal to Heaven in great national calamities. But the saints they invoked were deaf or impotent; for the passage of the bridge of Lodi, and Beaulieu's subsequent retreat to Mantua, left no possibility of defending Milan. The Archduke and his Duchess immediately left Milan, followed by a small retinue, and leaving only a moderate force in the citadel, which was not in a very defensible condition. Their carriages passed through a large crowd which filled the streets. As they moved slowly along, the royal pair were observed to shed natural tears, at leaving the capital of these princely possessions of their house. The people observed a profound silence, only broken by low whispers. They showed neither joy nor sorrow at the event which was passing—all thoughts were bent in anxious anticipation upon what was to happen next.

When the Archduke had departed, the restraint which his presence had imposed from habit and sentiment, as much as from fear of his authority, was of course removed, and many of the Milanese citizens began, with real or affected zeal for republicanism, to prepare themselves for the reception of the French. The three-coloured cockade was at first timidly assumed; but the example being shown, it seemed as if these emblems had fallen like snow into the caps and hats of the multitude. The imperial arms were removed from the public buildings, and a placard was put on the palace of the government with an inscription—"This house is to be let—apply for the keys to the French Commissioner Salicetti." The nobles hastened to lay aside their armorial bearings, their servants' liveries, and other badges of aristocracy. Meantime the magistrates caused order to be maintained in the town, by regular patrols of the burgher guard. A deputation of the principal inhabitants of Milan was sent to the victorious General with offers of full submission, since there was no longer room for resistance, or for standing upon terms.

On the 14th of May, Buonaparte made his public entry into Milan, under a triumphal arch prepared for the occasion, which he traversed, surrounded by his guards, and took up his residence in the arch-episcopal palace. The same evening a splendid entertainment was given, and the Tree of Liberty, (of which the aristocrats observed, that it was a bare pole without either leaves or fruit, roots or branches,) was erected with great form in the principal square. All this affectation of popular joy did not disarm the purpose of the French general, to make Milan contribute to the relief of his army. He imposed upon the place a requisition of twenty millions of livres, but offered to accept of goods of any sort in kind, and at a rateable valuation; for it may be easily supposed that specie, the representative of value, must be scarce in a city circumstanced as Milan was. The public funds of every description, even those dedicated to the support of hospitals, went into the French military chest; the church-plate was seized as part of the requisition; and, when all this was done, the citizens were burthened with the charge of finding rations for fifteen thousand men daily, by which force the citadel, with its Austrian garrison, was instantly to be blockaded.

While Lombardy suffered much, the neighbouring countries were not spared. The reader must be aware, that for more than a century Italy had been silently declining into that state of inactivity which succeeds great exertion, as a rapid and furious blaze sinks down into exhaustion and ashes. The keen judgment of Napoleon had seen, that the geographical shape of Italy, though presenting in many respects advantages for a great and commercial nation, offered this main impediment to its separate existence as one independent state, that its length being too great in proportion to its breadth, there was no point sufficiently central to preserve the due influence of a metropolis in relation to its extreme northern and southern provinces; and that the inhabitants of Naples and Lombardy being locally so far divided, and differing in climate, habits, and the variety of temper which climate and habits produce, could hardly be united under the same government. From these causes Italy was, after the demolition of the great Roman Empire, early broken up into different subdivisions, which, more civilized than the rest of Europe at the time, attracted in various degrees the attention of mankind; and at length, from the sacerdotal power of Rome, the wealth and extensive commerce of Venice and Genoa, the taste and splendour of Florence, and the ancient fame of the metropolis of the world, became of importance much over-proportioned to their actual extent of territory. But this time had passed away, and the Italian States, rich in remembrances, were now comparatively poor in point of immediate consequence in the scale of nations. They retained their oligarchical or monarchical forms and constitutions, as in the more vigorous state of their existence, but appeared to have lost their energies both for good and evil. The proud and jealous love which each Italian used to bear towards his own province was much abated; the jealousy of the factions which divided most of their states, and induced the citizens to hazard their own death or exile in the most trifling party quarrel, had subsided into that calm, selfish indifference, which disregards public interests of all kinds. They were ill governed, in so far as their rulers neglected all means of benefiting the subjects or improving the country; and they were thus far well-governed, that, softened by the civilization of the times, and perhaps by a tacit sense of their own weakness, their rulers had ceased, in a great measure, to exercise with severity the despotic powers with which they were in many cases invested, though they continued to be the cause of petty vexations, to which the natives had become callous. The Vatican slept like a volcano, which had exhausted its thunders; and Venice, the most jealous and cruel of oligarchies, was now shutting her wearied eyes, and closing her ears, against informers and spies of state. The Italian States stood, therefore, like a brotherhood of old trees, decayed at heart and root, but still making some show of branches and leaves,

until the French invasion rushed down, like the whirlwind which lays them prostrate.

In the relations between France and Italy, it must be observed that two of the most considerable of these States, Tuscany and Venice, were actually in league with the former country, having acknowledged the republic, and done nothing to deserve the chastisement of her armies. Others might be termed neutral, not having perhaps deemed themselves of consequence sufficient to take part in the quarrel of the coalesced powers against France. The Pope had given offence by the affair of Basseville, and the encouragement which his countenance afforded to the non-conforming clergy of France. But excepting Naples and Austrian Lombardy, no State in Italy could be exactly said to be at open war with the new republic. Buonaparte was determined, however, that this should make no difference in his mode of treating them.

The first of these slumbering potentates with whom he came in contact, was the Duke of Parma. This petty sovereign, even before Buonaparte entered Milan, had deprecated the victor's wrath; and although neither an adherent of the coalition, nor at war with France, he found himself obliged to purchase an armistice by heavy sacrifices. He paid a tribute of two millions of livres, besides furnishing horses and provisions to a large amount, and agreeing to deliver up twenty of the finest paintings in his cabinet, to be chosen by the French General.

The next of these sufferers was the Duke of Modena. This Prince was a man of moderate abilities; his business was hoarding money, and his pleasure consisted in nailing up, with his own princely hands, the tapestry which ornamented churches on days of high holiday; from which he acquired the nickname of the royal upholsterer. But his birth was illustrious as the descendant of that celebrated hero of Este, the patron of Tasso and of Ariosto; and his alliance was no less splendid, having married the sister of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette, and of Joseph the Second: then his daughter was married to the Arch-Duke Ferdinand, the Governor of Milan. Notwithstanding his double connexion with the Imperial family, the principality of Modena was so small that he might have been passed over as scarce worthy of notice, but for the temptation of his treasures, in the works of art, as well as in specie. On the approach of a column of the French army to Modena, the Duke fled from his capital, but sent his brother, the Chevalier d'Este, to capitulate with Napoleon.

It might have been urged in his favour, that he was no avowed partner in the coalition; but Buonaparte took for granted his good will towards his brother-in-law the Emperor of Austria, and esteemed it a crime deserving atonement. Indeed it was one which had not been proved by any open action, but neither could it admit of being disproved. The Duke was therefore obliged to purchase the privilege of neutrality, and to expiate his supposed good inclination for the house of Austria. Five millions and a half of French livres, with large contributions in provisions and accoutrements, perhaps cost the Duke of Modena more anxious thoughts than he had bestowed on the misfortunes of his imperial relatives.

To levy on obnoxious states or princes the means of paying or accommodating troops, would have been only what has been practised by victors in all ages. But an exaction of a new kind was now for the first time imposed on these Italian Princes. The Duke of Modena, like the Duke of Parma, was compelled to surrender twenty of his choicest pictures, to be selected at the choice of the French General, and the persons of taste with whom he might advise. This was the first time that a demand of this nature had been made in modern times in a public and avowed manner, and we must pause to consider the motives and justice of such a requisition.

Hitherto, works of art had been considered as sacred, even during the utmost extremities of war. They were judged to be the property, not so much

of the nation or individuals who happened to possess them, as of the civilized world in general, who were supposed to have a common interest in these productions, which, if exposed to become the ordinary spoils of war, could hardly escape damage or destruction. To take a strong example of forbearance, Frederick of Prussia was a passionate admirer of the fine arts, and no scrupulous investigator of the rights conferred by conquest, but rather disposed to stretch them to the uttermost. Yet when he obtained possession of Dresden under circumstances of high irritation, Frederick respected the valuable gallery, cabinets, and museums of the capital of Saxony, and preserved their contents inviolate, as a species of property which could not, and ought not, to fall within the rights of a conqueror. He considered the Elector as only the keeper of the gallery; and regarded the articles which it contained as belonging to the civilized world at large.

There are persons who demand the cause of this distinction, and require to know why works of art, the value of which is created solely by the opinion of those who pretend to understand them, and is therefore to be regarded as merely imaginary, or, as it is called by lawyers, a mere *pretium affectionis*, should be exempted from that martial law which disposes at pleasure of the real property of the vanquished.

It might easily be shown in reply, that the respect due to genius of the highest order, attaches with a sort of religious zeal to the objects of our admiration in the fine arts, and renders it a species of sacrilege to subject them to the chances of war. It has besides already been hinted, that these chef-d'œuvres being readily liable to damage, scarcely admitting of being repaired, and absolutely incapable of being replaced, their existence is hazarded by rendering them the objects of removal, according to the fluctuation of victory.

But it is surely sufficient to say, that wherever the progress of civilization has introduced rules to qualify and soften the extremities of war, these should be strictly adhered to. In the rudest ages of society, man avails himself of the right of the strongest in the fullest extent. The victor of the Sandwich Islands devours his enemy—the North American Indian tortures him to death—almost all savage tribes render their prisoners slaves, and sell them as such. As society advances, these inhumanities fall out of practice; and it is unnecessary to add, that, as the victorious general deserves honourable mention in history, who, by his clemency, relaxes in any respect the rigorous laws of conquest, so he must be censured in proportion, whose conduct tends to retrograde towards the brutal violence of primitive hostility.

Buonaparte cannot be exempted from this censure. He, as the willing agent of the Directory under whose commands he acted, had resolved to disregard the neutrality which had hitherto been considered as attaching to the productions of the fine arts, and, for the first time, had determined to view them as the spoils of conquest. The motive is more easily discovered than justified.

In the reign of Terror and Equality, the fine arts, with everything connected with cultivated feelings, had been regarded as inconsistent with the simplicity of the Republican character; and, like the successful fanatics of England, and the first enthusiastic votaries of the Koran, the true Sans Culottes were disposed to esteem a taste which could not generally exist without a previous superior education, as something aristocratic, and alien from the imaginary standard of equality, to which it was their purpose to lower all the exertions of intellect, as well as the possession of property. Palaces were therefore destroyed, and monuments broken to pieces.

But this brutal prejudice, with the other attempts of these frantic democrats to bring back the world to a state of barbarism, equally in moral and in general feeling, was discarded at the fall of the Jacobin authority. Those who succeeded to the government, exerted themselves laudably in endeavouring rather to excite men's minds to a love of those studies and tastes, which are ever found

any sincere and manly love of the arts, though this was so much talked of in France at the time. It must, on the contrary, be ascribed to the art and ambition of the Directory who ordered, and the General who obeyed; both of whom, being sensible that the national vanity would be flattered by this species of tribute, hastened to secure it an ample gratification. Buonaparte, in particular, was at least sufficiently aware, that, with however little purity of taste the Parisians might look upon these exquisite productions, they would be sufficiently alive to the recollection, that, being deemed by all civilized people the most admirable specimens in the world, the valour of the French armies, and the skill of their unrivalled general, had sent them to adorn the metropolis of France; and might hope, that once brought to the prime city of the Great Nation, such chef-d'œuvres could not again be subject to danger by transportation, but must remain there, fixed as household gods, for the admiration of posterity. So hoped, as we have seen, the victor himself; and doubtless with the proud anticipation, that in future ages the recollection of himself, and of his deeds, must be inseparably connected with the admiration which the Museum, ordained and enriched by him, was calculated to produce.

But art and ambition are apt to estimate the advantages of a favourite measure somewhat too hastily. By this breach of the law of nations, as hitherto acknowledged and acted upon, the French degraded their own character, and excited the strongest prejudice against their rapacity among the Italians, whose sense of injury was in proportion to the value which they set upon those splendid works, and to the dishonour which they felt at being forcibly deprived of them. Their lamentations were almost like those of Micah the Ephraimite, when robbed of "the graven image, and the Teraphim, and the Ephod, and the molten image," by the armed and overbearing Danites—"Ye have taken away my gods that I have made, and what have I more?"

Again, by this unjust proceeding, Buonaparte prepared for France and her capital the severe moral lesson inflicted upon her by the allies in 1815. Victory has wings as well as Riches; and the abuse of conquest, as of wealth, becomes frequently the source of bitter retribution. Had the paintings of Correggio, and other great masters, been left undisturbed in the custody of their true owners, there could not have been room, at an after period, when looking around the Louvre, for the reflection, "Here once were disposed the treasures of art, which, won by violence, were lost by defeat."

CHAPTER XXII.

Directory propose to divide the Army of Italy betwixt Buonaparte and Kellermann—Buonaparte resigns, and the Directory give up the point.—Insurrection against the French at Pavia—crushed—and the Leaders shot—Also at the Imperial Fiefs and Lugo, quelled and punished in the same way.—Reflections.—Austrians defeated at Borghetto, and retreat behind the Adige.—Buonaparte narrowly escapes being made Prisoner at Valeggio.—Mantua blockaded.—Verona occupied by the French.—King of Naples secedes from Austria.—Armistice purchased by the Pope.—The Neutrality of Tuscany violated, and Leghorn occupied by the French Troops.—Views of Buonaparte respecting the Revolutionizing of Italy—He temporizes.—Conduct of the Austrian Government at this Crisis.—Beaulieu displaced, and succeeded by Wurmser.—Buonaparte sits down before Mantua.

OCCUPYING Milan, and conqueror in so many battles, Buonaparte might be justly considered as in absolute possession of Lombardy, while the broken forces of Beaulieu had been compelled to retreat under that sole remaining

bulwark of the Austrian power, the strong fortress of Mantua, where they might await such support as should be detached to them through the Tyrol, but could undertake no offensive operations. To secure his position, the Austrian general had occupied the line formed by the Mincio, his left flank resting upon Mantua, his right upon Peschiera, a Venetian city and fortress, but of which he had taken possession, against the reclamation of the Venetian government, who were desirous of observing a neutrality between such powerful belligerents, not perhaps altogether aware how far the victor, in so dreadful a strife, might be disposed to neglect the general law of nations. The Austrian defence on the right was prolonged by the Lago di Garda, a large lake out of which the Mincio flows, and which, running thirty-five miles northward into the mountains of the Tyrol, maintained uninterrupted Beaulieu's communication with Germany.

Buonaparte in the meantime permitted his forces only the repose of four or five days, ere he again summoned them to active exertion. He called on them to visit the Capitol, there to re-establish (he ought to have said to *carry away*) the statues of the great men of antiquity, and to change, or rather renovate, the destinies of the finest district of Europe. But while thus engaged, he received orders from Paris respecting his farther proceedings, which must have served to convince him that *all* his personal enemies, all who doubted and feared him, were not to be found in the Austrian ranks.

The Directory themselves had begun to suspect the prudence of suffering the whole harvest of success which Italy afforded, to be reaped by the adventurous and haughty character who had first thrust in the sickle. They perhaps felt already an instinctive distrust of the waxing influence, which was destined one day to overpower their own. Under some such impression, they resolved to divide the army of Italy betwixt Buonaparte and Kellermann, directing the former general to pass the Po, and advance southward on Rome and Naples, with twenty thousand men; while Kellermann, with the other moiety of the Italian army, should press the siege of Mantua, and make head against the Austrians.

This was taking Buonaparte's victory out of his grasp; and he resented the proposal accordingly, by transmitting his resignation, and declining to have any concern in the loss of his army, and the fruits of his conquests. He affirmed, that Kellermann, with an army reduced to twenty thousand men, could not face Beaulieu, but would be speedily driven out of Lombardy; and that, in consequence, the army which advanced southward would be overwhelmed and destroyed. One bad general, he said, was better than two good ones. The Directory must have perceived from such a reply, the firm and inflexible nature of the man they had made the leader of their armies, but they dared not, such was his reputation, proceed in the plan they had formed for the diminution of his power; and perhaps, for the first time since the Revolution, the executive government of France was compelled to give way to a successful general, and adopt his views instead of their own. The campaign was left to his sole management; he obtained an ascendancy which he took admirable care not to relinquish, and it became the only task of the Directory, so far as Italy was concerned, to study phrases for intimating their approbation of the young general's measures.

Whatever were the ultimate designs of Buonaparte against Rome, he thought it prudent to suspend them until he should be free from all danger of the Austrians, by the final defeat of Beaulieu. For this object, he directed the divisions of his army towards the right bank of the Mincio, with a view of once more forcing Beaulieu's position, after having taken precautions for blockading the citadel of Milan, where the Austrians still held out, and for guarding Pavia and other points, which appeared necessary to secure his conquests.

Napoleon himself fixed his head-quarters at Lodi, upon the 24th of May. But he was scarcely arrived there, when he received the alarming intelligence, that the city of Pavia, with all the surrounding districts, were in arms in his

rear; that the tocsin was ringing in every village, and that news were circulated that the Prince of Condé's army, united with a strong Austrian force, had descended from the Tyrol into Italy. Some commotions had shown themselves in Milan, and the Austrian garrison there made demonstrations towards favouring the insurrection in Pavia, where the insurgents were completely successful, and had made prisoners a French corps of three hundred men.

Buonaparte represents these disturbances as effected by Austrian agents; but he had formerly assured us, that the Italians took little interest in the fate of their German masters. The truth is, that, having entered Italy with the most flattering assurances of observing respect for public and private property, the French had disgusted the inhabitants, by exacting the contributions which they had imposed on the country with great severity.* As Catholics, the Italians were also disgusted with the open indignities thrown on the places and objects of public worship, as well as on the persons and character of their priests.*

The nobles and the clergy naturally saw their ruin in the success of the French; and the lower classes joined them for the time, from dislike to foreigners, love of national independence, resentment of the exactions made, and the acts of sacrilege committed by the ultramontane invaders. About thirty thousand insurgents were in arms; but having no regular forces on which to rest as a rallying point, they were ill calculated to endure the rapid assault of the disciplined French.

Buonaparte, anxious to extinguish a flame so formidable, instantly returned from Lodi to Milan, at the head of a strong division, took order for the safety of the capital of Lombardy, and moved next morning towards Pavia, the centre of the insurrection. The village of Benasco, which was defended against Lannes, was taken by storm, the inhabitants put to the sword, and the place plundered and burnt. Napoleon himself arrived before Pavia, blew the gates open with his cannon, dispersed with ease the half-armed insurgents, and caused the leaders of the insurrection to be put to death, for having attempted to defend the independence of their country. He then seized on the persons of many inhabitants, and sent them to Paris as hostages for the subjection of their fellow-citizens.

The French general published a proclamation in the Republican style, in which he reproaches the insurgents for presuming to use arms in defence of their country, and menaces with fire and sword whatever individuals should in future prosecute the same daring course. He made his threat good some weeks afterwards, when a similar insurrection took place in those districts called the Imperial fiefs, and still later, when an effort at resistance was attempted in the town of Lugo. On both occasions, the leaders of the armed inhabitants were tried by a military commission, condemned, and shot. On the last, indeed, to revenge the defeat sustained by a squadron of French dragoons, Lugo was taken by storm, pillaged, burnt, and the men put to the sword; while some credit seems to be taken by Buonaparte in his despatches, for the clemency of the French, which spared the women and children.

It is impossible to read the account of these severities, without contrasting them with the opinions professed on other occasions, both by the republican and imperial governments of France. The first of these exclaimed as at an unheard-of cruelty, when the Duke of Brunswick, in his celebrated proclamation, threatened to treat as a brigand every Frenchman, not being a soldier, whom he should find under arms, and to destroy such villages as should offer resistance to the invading army. The French at that time considered with justice, that,

* It has been alleged, that in a farce exhibited on the public stage by authority of Buonaparte, the Pope was introduced in his pontifical dress. This, which could not be looked on as less than sacrilege by a Catholic population, does not accord with the general conduct of Buonaparte. See, however, *Tableau des premières Guerres de Buonaparte*, Paris, 1815. par Le Chevalier Mechaud de Villelle, p. 41.

if there is one duty more holy than another, it is that which calls on men to defend their native country against invasion. Napoleon, being emperor, was of the same opinion in the years 1813 and 1814, when the allies entered the French territories, and when, in various proclamations, he called on the inhabitants to rise against the invaders with the implements of their ordinary labour when they had no better arms, and "to shoot a foreigner as they would a wolf." It would be difficult to reconcile these invitations with the cruel vengeance taken on the town of Lugo, for observing a line of conduct which, in similar circumstances, Buonaparte so keenly and earnestly recommended to those whom fortune had made his own subjects.

The brief insurrection of Pavia suppressed by these severities, Buonaparte once more turned his thoughts to the strong position of the Austrians, with the purpose of reducing Beaulieu to a more decided state of disability, before he executed the threatened vengeance of the Republic on the Sovereign Pontiff. For this purpose he advanced to Brescia, and manœuvred in such a manner as induced Beaulieu, whom repeated surprises of the same kind had not put upon his guard, to believe, that either the French general intended to attempt the passage of the Mincio at the small but strong town of Peschiera, where that river issues from the Lago di Guarda, or else that, marching northward along the eastern bank, he designed to come round the head of the lake, and thus turn the right of the Austrian position. While Beaulieu disposed his forces as expecting an attack on the right of his line, Buonaparte, with his usual colerity, proposed to attack him on the centre, at Borghetto, a town situated on the Mincio, and commanding a bridge over it, about ten miles lower than Peschiera.

On the 30th May, the French general attacked, with superior force, and repulsed across the Mincio, an Austrian corps who endeavoured to cover the town. The fugitives endeavoured to demolish the bridge, and did break down one of its arches. But the French, rushing forward with impetuosity, under cover of a heavy fire upon the retreating Austrians, repaired the broken arch so as to effect a passage, and the Mincio, passed as the Po and the Adda had been before, ceased in its turn to be a protection to the army drawn up behind it.

Beaulieu, who had his head-quarters at Valeggio, a village nearly opposite to Borghetto, hastened to retreat, and, evacuating Peschiera, marched his dismayed forces behind the Adige, leaving five hundred prisoners, with other trophies of victory, in the hands of the French. Buonaparte had designed that this day of success should have been still more decisive, for he meditated an attack upon Peschiera at the moment when the passage at Borghetto was accomplished; but ere Augereau, to whom this manœuvre was committed, had time to approach Peschiera, it was evacuated by the Austrians, who were in full retreat by Castel Nuovo, protected by their cavalry.

The left of the Austrian line, cut off from the centre by the passage of the French, had been stationed at Puzzuolo, lower on the Mincio. When Sebottendorf, who commanded the Imperial troops stationed on the left bank, heard the cannonade, he immediately ascended the river, to assist his commander-in-chief to repel the French, or to take them in flank if it was already crossed. The retreat of Beaulieu made both purposes impossible; and yet this march of Sebottendorf had almost produced a result of greater consequence than would have been the most complete victory.

The French division which first crossed the Mincio, had passed through Valeggio without halting, in pursuit of Beaulieu, by whom the village had been just before abandoned. Buonaparte with a small retinue remained in the place, and Massena's division were still on the right bank of the Mincio, preparing their dinner. At this moment the advanced guard of Sebottendorf, consisting of hulans and hussars, pushed into the village of Valeggio. There was but barely time to cry to arms, and, shutting the gates of the inn, to employ

the general's small escort in its defence, while Buonaparte, escaping by the garden, mounted his horse, and galloped towards Massena's division. The soldiers threw aside their cookery, and marched instantly against Sebottendorf, who, with much difficulty, and not without loss, effected a retreat in the same direction as his commander-in-chief Beaulieu. This personal risk induced Buonaparte to form what he called the corps of guides, veterans of ten years' service at least, who were perpetually near his person, and, like the *Triarii* of the Romans, were employed only when the most desperate efforts of courage were necessary. Bessieres, afterwards Duke of Istria, and Marechal of France, was placed at the head of this chosen body, which gave rise to the formation of the celebrated Imperial Guards of Napoleon.

The passage of the Mincio obliged the Austrians to retire within the frontier of the Tyrol; and they might have been considered as completely expelled from Italy, had not Mantua and the citadel of Milan still continued to display the Imperial banners. The castle of Milan was a place of no extraordinary strength, the surrender of which might be calculated on so soon as the general fate of war had declared itself against the present possessors. But Mantua was by nature one of those almost impregnable fortresses, which may long, relying on its own resources, defy any compulsion but that of famine.

The town and fortress of Mantua are situated on a species of island, five or six leagues square, called the Seraglio, formed by three lakes, which communicate with, or rather are formed by, the Mincio and the Po. This island has access to the land by five causeways, the most important of which was in 1796 defended by a regular citadel, called, from the vicinity of a ducal palace, *La Favorita*. Another was defended by an entrenched camp extending between the fortress and the lake. The third was protected by a hornwork. The remaining two causeways were only defended by gates and drawbridges. Mantua, low in situation, and surrounded by water, in a warm climate, is naturally unhealthy; but the air was likely to be still more destructive to a besieging army, (which necessarily lay in many respects more exposed to the elements, and were besides in greater numbers, and less habituated to the air of the place,) than to a garrison who had been seasoned to it, and were well accommodated within the fortress.

To surprise a place so strong by a coup-de-main was impossible, though Buonaparte represents his soldiers as murmuring that such a desperate feat was not attempted. But he blockaded Mantua with a large force, and proceeded to take such other measures to improve his success, as might pave the way to future victories. The garrison was numerous, amounting to from twelve to fourteen thousand men; and the deficiencies of the fortifications, which the Austrians had neglected in over security, were made up for by the natural strength of the place. Yet of the five causeways, Buonaparte made himself master of four; and thus the enemy lost possession of all beyond the walls of the town and citadel, and had only the means of attaining the mainland through the citadel of *La Favorita*. Lines of circumvallation were formed, and Serurier was left in blockade of the fortress, which the possession of four of the accesses enabled him to accomplish with a body of men inferior to the garrison.

To complete the blockade, it was necessary to come to some arrangement with the ancient republic of Venice. With this venerable government Napoleon had the power of working his own pleasure; for although the state might have raised a considerable army to assist the Austrians, to whom its senate, or aristocratic government, certainly bore good-will, yet, having been in amity with the French Republic, they deemed the step too hazardous, and vainly trusting that their neutrality would be respected, they saw the Austrian power completely broken for the time, before they took any active measures either to stand in their defence, or to deprecate the wrath of the victor. But when the

line of the Mincio was forced, and Buonaparte occupied the Venetian territory on the left bank, it was time to seek by concessions that deference to the rights of an independent country, which the once haughty aristocracy of Venice had lost a favourable opportunity of supporting by force.

There was one circumstance which rendered their cause unfavourable. Louis XVIII., under the title of a private person, the Comte de Lisle, had received the hospitality of the republic, and was permitted to remain at Verona, living in strict seclusion. The permission to entertain this distinguished exile, the Venetian government had almost mendicated from the French revolutionary rulers, in a manner which we would term mean, were it not for the goodness of the intention, which leads us to regard the conduct of the ancient mistress of the Adriatic with pity rather than contempt. But when the screen of the Austrian force no longer existed between the invading armies of France and the Venetian territories—when the final subjugation of the north of Italy was resolved on—the Directory peremptorily demanded, and the senate of Venice were obliged to grant, an order, removing the Comte de Lisle from the boundaries of the republic.

The illustrious exile protested against this breach of hospitality, and demanded, before parting, that his name, which had been placed on the golden book of the republic, should be erased, and that the armour presented by Henry IV. to Venice, should be restored to his descendant. Both demands were evaded, as might have been expected in the circumstances, and the future monarch of France left Verona on the 21st of April 1796, for the army of the Prince of Condé, in whose ranks he proposed to place himself, without the purpose of assuming any command, but only that of fighting as a volunteer in the character of the first gentleman of France. Other less distinguished emigrants, to the number of several hundreds, who had found an asylum in Italy, were, by the successes at Lodi and Borghetto, compelled to fly to other countries.

Buonaparte, immediately after the battle of Borghetto, and the passage of the Mincio, occupied the town of Verona, and did not fail to intimate to its magistrates, that if the *Pretender*, as he termed him, to the throne of France, had not left Verona before his arrival, he would have burnt to the ground a town which, acknowledging him as King of France, assumed, in doing so, the air of being itself the capital of that republic. This might, no doubt, sound gallant in Paris; but Buonaparte knew well that Louis of France was not received in the Venetian territory as the successor to his brother's throne, but only with the hospitality due to an unfortunate prince, who, suiting his claim and title to his situation, was content to shelter his head, as a private man might have done, from the evils which seemed to pursue him.

The neutrality of Venice was, however, for the time admitted, though not entirely from respect for the law of nations; for Buonaparte is at some pains to justify himself for not having seized without ceremony on the territories and resources of that republic, although a neutral power as far as her utmost exertions could preserve neutrality. He contented himself for the time with occupying Verona, and other dependencies of Venice upon the line of the Adige. "You are too weak," he said to the Proveditore Fescarelli, "to pretend to enforce neutrality with a few hundred Slavonians on two such nations as France and Austria. The Austrians have not respected your territory where it suited their purpose, and I must, in requital, occupy such part as falls within the line of the Adige."

But he considered that the Venetian territories to the westward should in policy be allowed to retain the character of neutral ground, which The Government, as that of Venice was emphatically called, would not, for their own sakes, permit them to lose; while otherwise, if occupied by the French as conquerors, these timid neutrals might upon any reverse have resumed the character of fierce

opponents. And, at all events, in order to secure a territory as a conquest, which, if respected as neutral, would secure itself, there would have been a necessity for dividing the French forces, which it was Buonaparte's wish to concentrate. From interested motives, therefore, if not from respect to justice, Buonaparte deferred seizing the territory of Venice when within his grasp, conscious that the total defeat of the Austrians in Italy would, when accomplished, leave the prey as attainable, and more defenceless than ever. Having disposed his army in its position, and prepared some of its divisions for the service which they were to perform as moveable columns, he returned to Milan to reap the harvest of his successes.

The first of these consisted in the defection of the King of Naples from the cause of Austria, to which, from family connexion, he had yet remained attached, though of late with less deep devotion. His cavalry had behaved better during the engagements on the Mincio, than has been of late the custom with Neapolitan troops, and had suffered accordingly. The King, discouraged with the loss, solicited an armistice, which he easily obtained; for his dominions being situated at the lower extremity of Italy, and his force extending to sixty thousand men at least, it was of importance to secure the neutrality of a power who might be dangerous, and who was not, as matters stood, under the immediate control of the French. A Neapolitan ambassador was sent to Paris to conclude a final peace; in the meanwhile, the soldiers of the King of the Two Sicilies were withdrawn from the army of Beaulieu, and returned to their own country. The dispositions of the Court of Naples continued, nevertheless, to vacillate, as opportunity of advantage, joined with the hatred of the Queen, (sister of Marie Antoinette,) or the fear of the French military superiority, seemed to predominate.

The storm now thickened round the devoted head of the Pope. Ferrara and Bologna, the territories of which belonged to the Holy See, were occupied by the French troops. In the latter place, four hundred of the Papal troops were made prisoners, with a cardinal who acted as their officer. The latter was dismissed on his parole. But when summoned to return to the French head-quarters, his Eminence declined to obey, and amused the Republican officers a good deal, by alleging that the Pope had dispensed with his engagement. Afterwards, however, there were officers of no mean rank in the French service, who could contrive to extricate themselves from the engagement of a parole, without troubling the Pope for his interference on the occasion. Influenced by the approaching danger, the Court of Rome sent Azara, the Spanish minister, with full powers to treat for an armistice. It was a remarkable part of Buonaparte's character, that he knew as well when to forbear as when to strike. Rome, it was true, was an enemy whom France, or at least its present rulers, both hated and despised, but the moment was then inopportune for the prosecution of their resentment. To have detached a sufficient force in that direction, would have weakened the French army in the north of Italy, where fresh bodies of German troops were already arriving, and might have been attended with great ultimate risk, since there was a possibility that the English might have transported to Italy the forces which they were about to withdraw from Corsica, amounting to six thousand men. But though these considerations recommended to Napoleon a negotiation with the Pope, his Holiness was compelled to purchase the armistice at a severe rate. Twenty-one millions of francs, in actual specie, with large contributions in forage and military stores, the cession of Ancona, Bologna, and Ferrara, not forgetting one hundred of the finest pictures, statues, and similar objects of art, to be selected according to the choice of the committee of artists who attended the French army, were the price of a respite which was not of long duration. It was particularly stipulated, with Republican ostentation, that the busts of the elder and younger

Brutus were to be among the number of ceded articles; and it was in this manner that Buonaparte made good his vaunt, of establishing in the Roman capitol the statues of the illustrious and classical dead.

The Arch-Duke of Tuscany was next to undergo the republican discipline. It is true, that prince had given no offence to the French Republic; on the contrary, he had claims of merit with them, from having been the very first power in Europe who acknowledged them as a legal government, and having ever since been in strict amity with them. It seemed also, that while justice required he should be spared, the interest of the French themselves did not oppose the conclusion. His country could have no influence on the fate of the impending war, being situated on the western side of the Appenines. In these circumstances, to have seized on his museum, however tempting, or made requisitions on his territories, would have appeared unjust towards the earliest ally of the French Republic; so Buonaparte contented himself with seizing on the Grand Duke's sea-port of Leghorn, confiscating the English goods which his subjects had imported, and entirely ruining the once flourishing commerce of the Dukedom. It was a principal object with the French to seize the British merchant vessels, who, confiding in the respect due to a neutral power, were lying in great numbers in the harbour; but the English merchantmen had such early intelligence as enabled them to set sail for Corsica, although a very great quantity of valuable goods fell into the possession of the French.

While the French general was thus violating the neutrality of the Grand Duke, occupying by surprise his valuable seaport, and destroying the commerce of his state, the unhappy prince was compelled to receive him at Florence, with all the respect due to a valued friend, and profess the utmost obligation to him for his lenity, while Manfredini, the Tuscan minister, endeavoured to throw a veil of decency over the transactions at Leghorn, by allowing that the English were more masters in that port than was the Grand Duke himself. Buonaparte disdained to have recourse to any paltry apologies. "The French flag," he said, "has been insulted in Leghorn—You are not strong enough to cause it to be respected. The Directory has commanded me to occupy the place." Shortly after, Buonaparte, during an entertainment given to him by the Grand Duke at Florence, received intelligence that the citadel of Milan had at length surrendered. He rubbed his hands with self-congratulation, and turning to the Grand Duke, observed, "that the Emperor, his brother, had now lost his last possession in Lombardy."

When we read of the exactions and indignities to which the strong reduce the weak, it is impossible not to remember the simile of Napoleon himself, who compared the alliance of France and an inferior state, to a giant embracing a dwarf. "The poor dwarf," he added, "may probably be suffocated in the arms of his friend; but the giant does not mean it, and cannot help it."

While Buonaparte made truce with several of the old states in Italy, or rather adjourned their destruction in consideration of large contributions, he was far from losing sight of the main object of the French Directory, which was to cause the adjacent governments to be revolutionized and new-modelled on a republican form, corresponding to that of the Great Nation herself.

This scheme was, in every respect, an exceedingly artful one. In every state which the French might overrun or conquer, there must occur, as we have already repeatedly noticed, men fitted to form the members of revolutionary government, and who, from their previous situation and habits, must necessarily be found eager to do so. Such men are sure to be supported by the rabble of large towns, who are attracted by the prospect of plunder, and by the splendid promises of liberty, which they always understand as promising the equalization of property. Thus provided with materials for their edifice, the bayonets of the French army were of strength sufficient to prevent the task from being interrupted, and the French Republic had soon to greet sister states, under the

government of men who held their offices by the pleasure of France, and who were obliged, therefore, to comply with all her requisitions, however unreasonable.

This arrangement afforded the French government an opportunity of deriving every advantage from the subordinate republics, which could possibly be drained out of them, without at the same time incurring the odium of making the exactions in their own name. It is a custom in some countries, when a cow who has lost her calf will not yield her milk freely, to place before the refractory animal the skin of her young one stuffed, so as to have some resemblance to life. The cow is deceived by this imposture, and yields to be milked upon seeing this representative of her offspring. In like manner, the show of independence assigned to the Batavian, and other associated republics, enabled France to drain these countries of supplies, which, while they had the appearance of being given to the governments of those who granted the supplies, passed, in fact, into the hands of their engrossing ally. Buonaparte was sufficiently aware that it was expected from him to extend the same system to Italy, and to accelerate, in the conquered countries of that fertile land, this species of political regeneration; but it would appear that, upon the whole, he thought the soil scarcely prepared for a republican harvest. He mentions, no doubt, that the natives of Bologna and Reggio, and other districts, were impatient to unite with the French as allies, and intimate friends; but even these expressions are so limited as to make it plain that the feelings of the Italians in general were not as yet favourable to that revolution which the Directory desired, and which he endeavoured to forward.

He had, indeed, in all his proclamations, declared to the inhabitants of the invaded countries, that his war was not waged with them but with their governments, and had published the strictest orders for the discipline to be observed by his followers. But though this saved the inhabitants from immediate violence at the hand of the French soldiery, it did not diminish the weight of the requisitions with which the country at large was burthened, and to which poor and rich had to contribute their share. They were pillaged with regularity, and by order, but they were not the less pillaged; and Buonaparte himself has informed us that the necessity of maintaining the French army at their expense very much retarded the march of French principles in Italy. "You cannot," he says, with much truth, "at the same moment strip a people of their substance, and persuade them while doing so, that you are their friend and benefactor."

He mentions also, in the Saint Helena manuscripts, the regret expressed by the wise and philosophical part of the community, that the revolution of Rome, the source and director of superstitious opinions, had not been commenced; but frankly admits that the time was not come for going to such extremities, and that he was contented with plundering the Roman See of its money and valuables, waiting until the fit moment should arrive of totally destroying that ancient hierarchy.

It was not without difficulty that Buonaparte could bring the Directory to understand and relish these temporising measures. They had formed a false idea of the country, and of the state and temper of the people, and were desirous at once to revolutionize Rome, Naples, and Tuscany.

Napoleon, more prudently, left these extensive regions under the direction of their old and feeble governments, whom he compelled in the interim to supply him with money and contributions, in exchange for a protracted existence, which he intended to destroy so soon as the fit opportunity should offer itself. What may be thought of this policy in diplomacy, we pretend not to say; but in private life it would be justly branded as altogether infamous. In point of morality, it resembles the conduct of a robber, who, having exacted the surrender of the traveller's property, as a ransom for his life, concludes his violence by murder.

It is alleged, and we have little doubt with truth, that the Pope was equally insincere, and struggled only, by immediate submission, to prepare for the hour, when the Austrians should strengthen their power in Italy. But it is the duty of the historian loudly to proclaim, that the bad faith of one party in a treaty forms no excuse for that of the other; and that national contracts ought to be, especially on the stronger side, as pure in their intent, and executed as rigidly, as if those with whom they were contracted were held to be equally sincere in their propositions. If the more powerful party judge otherwise, the means are in their hand to continue the war; and they ought to encounter their more feeble enemy by detection, and punishment of his fraud, not by anticipating the same deceitful course which their opponent has resorted to in the consciousness of his weakness,—like a hare which doubles before the hounds when she has no other hope of escape. It will be well with the world, when falsehood and finesse are as thoroughly exploded in international communication, as they are among individuals in all civilized countries.

But though those states, whose sovereigns could afford to pay for forbearance, were suffered for a time to remain under their ancient governments, it might have been thought that Lombardy, from which the Austrians had been almost totally driven, and where, of course, there was no one to compound with on the part of the old government, would have been made an exception. Accordingly, the French faction in these districts, with all the numerous class who were awakened by the hope of national independence, expected impatiently the declaration of their freedom from the Austrian yoke, and their erection, under the protection of France, into a republic on the same model with that of the Great Nation. But although Buonaparte encouraged men who held those opinions, and writers who supported them, he had two weighty reasons for procrastinating on this point. First, if France manumitted Lombardy, and converted her from a conquered province into an ally, she must in consistency have abstained from demanding of the liberated country those supplies, by which Buonaparte's army was entirely paid and supported. Again, if this difficulty could be got over, there remained the secret purpose of the Directory to be considered. They had determined, when they should make peace with the Emperor of Austria, to exact the cession of Belgium and the territory of Luxembourg, as provinces lying convenient to France, and had resolved, that under certain circumstances, they would even give up Lombardy again to his dominion, rather than not obtain these more desirable objects. To erect a new republic in the country which they were prepared to restore to its former sovereign, would have been to throw a bar in the way of their own negotiation. Buonaparte had therefore the difficult task of at once encouraging, on the part of the republicans of Lombardy, the principles which induced them to demand a separate government, and of soothing them to expect with patience events, which he was secretly conscious might possibly never come to pass. The final issue shall be told elsewhere. It may be just necessary to observe, that the conduct of the French towards the republicans whom they had formed no pre-determination to support, was as uncandid as towards the ancient governments whom they treated with. They sold to the latter false hopes of security, and encouraged the former to express sentiments and opinions, which must have exposed them to ruin, in case of the restoration of Lombardy to its old rulers, an event which the Directory all along contemplated in secret. Such is, in almost all cases, the risk incurred by a domestic faction, who trust to carry their peculiar objects in the bosom of their own country by means of a foreign nation. Their too powerful auxiliaries are ever ready to sacrifice them to their own views of emolument.

Having noticed the effect of Buonaparte's short but brilliant campaign on other states, we must observe the effects which his victories produced on Austria herself. These were entirely consistent with her national character. The same tardiness which has long made the government of Austria slow in availing them

selves of advantageous circumstances, cautious in their plans, and unwilling to adopt, or indeed to study to comprehend, a new system of tactics, even after having repeatedly experienced its terrible efficacies, is combined with the better qualities of firm determination, resolute endurance, and unquenchable spirit. The Austrian slowness and obstinacy, which have sometimes threatened them with ruin, have, on the other hand, often been compensated by their firm perseverance and courage in adversity.

Upon the present occasion, Austria showed ample demonstration of the various qualities we have ascribed to her. The rapid and successive victories of Buonaparte, appeared to her only the rash flight of an eaglet, whose juvenile audacity had over-estimated the strength of his pinion. The Imperial Council resolved to sustain their diminished force in Italy, with such reinforcements as might enable them to reassume the complete superiority over the French, though at the risk of weakening their armies on the Rhine. Fortune in that quarter, though of a various complexion, had been on the whole more advantageous to the Austrians than elsewhere, and seemed to authorize the detaching considerable reinforcements from the eastern frontier, on which they had been partially victorious, to Italy, where, since Buonaparte had descended from the Alps, they had been uniformly unfortunate.

Beaulieu, aged and unlucky, was no longer considered as a fit opponent to his inventive, young, and active adversary. He was as full of displeasure, it is said, against the Aulic Council, for the associates whom they had assigned him, as they could be with him for his bad success.* He was recalled, therefore, in that species of disgrace which misfortune never fails to infer, and the command of his remaining forces, now drawn back and secured within the passes of the Tyrol, was provisionally assigned to the veteran Melas.

Meanwhile Wurmser, accounted one of the best of the Austrian generals, was ordered to place himself at the head of thirty thousand men from the imperial forces on the Rhine, and, traversing the Tyrol, and collecting what recruits he could in that warlike district, to assume the command of the Austrian army, which, expelled from Italy, now lay upon its frontiers, and might be supposed eager to resume their national supremacy in the fertile climates out of which they had been so lately driven.

Aware of the storm which was gathering, Buonaparte made every possible effort to carry Mantua before arrival of the formidable Austrian army, whose first operation would doubtless be to raise the siege of that important place. A scheme to take the city and castle by surprise, by a detachment which should pass to the Seraglio, or islet on which Mantua is situated, by night and in boats, having totally failed, Buonaparte was compelled to open trenches, and proceed as by regular siege. The Austrian general, Canto D'Irles, when summoned to surrender it, replied that his orders were to defend the place to extremity. Napoleon, on his side, assembled all the battering ordnance which could be collected from the walls of the neighbouring cities and fortresses, and the attack and defence commenced in the most vigorous manner on both sides; the French making every effort to reduce the city before Wurmser should open his campaign, the governor determined to protract his resistance, if possible, until he

* The following letter appears in the journals as an intercepted despatch from Beaulieu to the Aulic Council of War. It is perhaps supposititious, but seems worthy of preservation as expressing the irritated feelings with which the veteran general was certainly affected, whether he wrote the letter in question or not. It will be recollected, that D'Argenteau, of whom he complains, was the cause of his original misfortunes at Monte Notte. See p. 307. "I asked you for a General, and you have sent me Argenteau.—I am quite aware that he is a great lord, and that he is to be created Field-marshal of the Empire, to atone for my having placed him under arrest.—I apprise you that I have no more than twenty thousand men remaining, and that the French are sixty thousand strong. I apprise you farther, that I will retreat to-morrow—next day—the day after that—and every day—even to Siberia itself, if they pursue me so far. My age gives me right to speak out the truth. Hasten to make peace on any conditions whatsoever."—*Moniteur*, 1798. No. 269.

was relieved by the advance of that general. But although red-hot balls were expended in profusion, and several desperate and bloody assaults and sallies took place, many more battles were to be fought, and much more blood expended, before Buonaparte was fated to succeed in this important object.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Campaign on the Rhine.—General Plan.—Wartensleben and the Archduke Charles retire before Jourdan and Moreau.—The Archduke forms a junction with Wartensleben, and defeats Jourdan, who retires—Moreau, also, makes his celebrated Retreat through the Black Forest.—Buonaparte raises the siege of Mantua, and defeats the Austrians at Salo and Lonato.—Misbehaviour of the French General, Valette, at Castiglione.—Lonato taken, with the French Artillery, on 3d August.—Retaken by Massena and Augereau.—Singular escape of Buonaparte from being captured at Lonato.—Wurmser defeated between Lonato and Castiglione, and retreats on Trent and Roveredo.—Buonaparte resumes his position before Mantua.—Effects of the French Victories on the different Italian States.—Inflexibility of Austria.—Wurmser recruited.—Battle of Roveredo.—French victorious, and Massena occupies Trent.—Buonaparte defeats Wurmser at Primolano—and at Bassano, 8th September.—Wurmser flies to Vicenza.—Battle of Arcola.—Wurmser finally shut up within the walls of Mantua.

THE reader must, of course, be aware, that Italy, through which we are following the victorious career of Napoleon, was not the only scene of war betwixt France and Austria, but that a field of equally strenuous and much more doubtful contest was opened upon the Rhine, where the high military talents of the Archduke Charles were opposed to those of Moreau and Jourdan, the French generals.

The plan which the Directory had adopted for the campaign of 1796 was of a gigantic character, and menaced Austria, their most powerful enemy upon the continent, with nothing short of total destruction. It was worthy of the genius of Carnot, by whom it was formed, and of Napoleon and Moreau, by whom it had been revised and approved. Under sanction of this general plan, Buonaparte regulated the Italian campaign in which he had proved so successful; and it had been schemed, that to allow Austria no breathing space, Moreau, with the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, should press forward on the eastern frontier of Germany, supported on the left by Jourdan, at the head of the Army of the Rhine, and that both generals should continue to advance, until Moreau should be in a position to communicate with Buonaparte through the Tyrol. When this junction of the whole forces of France, in the centre of the Austrian dominions, was accomplished, it was Carnot's ultimate plan that they should advance upon Vienna, and dictate peace to the Emperor under the walls of his capital.

Of this great project, the part entrusted to Buonaparte was completely executed, and for some time the fortune of war seemed equally auspicious to France upon the Rhine as in Italy. Moreau and Jourdan crossed that great national boundary at Neuwied and Kehl, and moved eastward through Germany, forming a connected front of more than sixty leagues in breadth, until Moreau had actually crossed the river Leck, and was almost touching with his right flank the passes of the Tyrol, through which he was, according to the plan of the campaign, to have communicated with Buonaparte.

During this advance of two hostile armies, amounting each to seventy-five thousand men, which filled all Germany with consternation, the Austrian leader

Wartensleben was driven from position to position by Jourdan, while the Archduke Charles was equally unable to maintain his ground before Moreau. The Imperial generals were reduced to this extremity by the loss of the army, consisting of from thirty to thirty-five thousand men, who had been detached under Wurmser to support the remains of Beaulieu's forces, and reinstate the Austrian affairs in Italy, and who were now on their march through the Tyrol for that purpose. But the Archduke was an excellent and enterprising officer, and at this important period he saved the empire of Austria by a bold and decided manœuvre. Leaving a large part of his army to make head against Moreau, or at least to keep him in check, the Archduke moved to the right with the rest, so as to form a junction with Wartensleben, and overwhelm Jourdan with a local superiority of numbers, being the very principle on which the French themselves achieved so many victories. Jourdan was totally defeated, and compelled to make a hasty and disorderly retreat, which was rendered disastrous by the insurrection of the German peasantry around his fugitive army. Moreau, also unable to maintain himself in the heart of Germany, when Jourdan, with the army which covered his left flank, was defeated, was likewise under the necessity of retiring, but conducted his retrograde movement with such dexterity, that his retreat through the Black Forest, where the Austrians hoped to cut him off, has been always judged worthy to be compared to a great victory. Such were the proceedings on the Rhine, and in the interior of Germany, which must be kept in view as influencing, at first by the expected success of Moreau and Jourdan, and afterwards by their actual failure, the movements of the Italian army.

As the divisions of Wurmser's army began to arrive on the Tyrolese district of Trent, where the Austrian general had fixed his head-quarters, Buonaparte became urgent, either that reinforcements should be despatched to him from France, or that the armies on the Rhine should make such a movement in advance towards the point where they might co-operate with him, as had been agreed upon at arranging the original plan of the campaign. But he obtained no succours; and though the campaign on the Rhine commenced, as we have seen, in the month of June, yet that period was too late to afford any diversion in favour of Napoleon, Wurmser and his whole reinforcements being already either by that time arrived, or on the point of arriving, at the place where they were to commence operations against the French army of Italy.

The thunder-cloud which had been so long blackening on the mountains of the Tyrol, seemed now about to discharge its fury. Wurmser, having under his command perhaps eighty thousand men, was about to march from Trent against the French, whose forces, amounting to scarce half so many, were partly engaged in the siege of Mantua, and partly dispersed in the towns and villages on the Adige and Chiese, for covering the division of Serrurier, which carried on the siege. The Austrian veteran, confident in his numbers, was only anxious so to regulate his advance, as to derive the most conclusive consequences from the victory which he doubted not to obtain. With an imprudence which the misfortunes of Beaulieu ought to have warned him against, he endeavoured to occupy with the divisions of his army so large an extent of country, as rendered it very difficult for them to maintain their communications with each other. This was particularly the case with his left wing under Quasdonowich, the Prince of Reuss, and General Ocskay, who were detached down the valley of the river Chiese, with orders to direct their march on Brescia. This division was destined to occupy Brescia, and cut off the retreat of the French in the direction of Milan. The right wing of Wurmser's army, under Melas, was to descend the Adige by both banks at once, and manœuvre on Vienna, while the centre, commanded by the Austrian Field-marshal in person, was to march southward by the left bank of the Lago di Guarda, take possession of Peschiera, which the French occupied, and, descending the Mincio, relieve the siege of

Mantua. There was this radical error in the Austrian plan, that, by sending Quasdonowich's division by the valley of Chiese, Wurmser placed the broad lake of Guarda, occupied by a French flotilla, between his left wing and the rest of his army, and of course made it impossible for the centre and left to support Quasdonowich, or even to have intelligence of his motions or his fate.

The active invention of Buonaparte, sure as he was to be seconded by the zeal and rapidity of the French army, speedily devised the means to draw advantage from this dislocation of the Austrian forces. He resolved not to await the arrival of Wurmser and Melas, but, concentrating his whole strength, to march into the valley of Chiese, and avail himself of the local superiority thus obtained, to attack and overpower the Austrian division left under Quasdonowich, who was advancing on Brescia, down the eastern side of the lake. For this purpose one great sacrifice was necessary. The plan inevitably involved the raising of the siege of Mantua. Napoleon did not hesitate to relinquish this great object at whatever loss, as it was his uniform system to sacrifice all secondary views, and to incur all lesser hazards, to secure what he considered as the main object of the campaign. Serrurier, who commanded the blockading army, was hastily ordered to destroy as much as possible of the cannon and stores which had been collected with so much pains for the prosecution of the siege. An hundred guns were abandoned in the trenches, and Wurmser, on arriving at Mantua, found that Buonaparte had retired with a precipitation resembling that of fear.

On the night of the 31st July this operation took place, and, leaving the division of Augereau at Borghetto, and that of Massena at Peschiera, to protect, while it was possible, the line of the Mincio, Buonaparte rushed, at the head of an army which his combinations had rendered superior, upon the right wing of the Austrians, which had already directed its march to Lonato, near the bottom of the Lago di Guarda, in order to approach the Mincio, and resume its communication with Wurmser. But Buonaparte, placed by the celerity of his movements between the two hostile armies, defeated one division of the Austrian right at Salo, upon the lake, and another at Lonato. At the same time, Augereau and Massena, leaving just enough of men at their posts of Borghetto and Peschiera to maintain a respectable defence against Wurmser, made a forced march to Brescia, which was occupied by another division of the Austrian right wing. But that body, finding itself insulated, and conceiving that the whole French army was debouching on them from different points, was already in full retreat towards the Tyrol, from which it had advanced with the expectation of turning Buonaparte's flank, and destroying his retreat upon Milan. Some French troops were left to accelerate their flight, and prevent their again making head, while Massena and Augereau, rapidly countermarching, returned to the banks of the Mincio to support their respective rear-guards, which they had left at Borghetto and Peschiera, on the line of that river.

They received intelligence, however, which induced them to halt upon this counter-march. Both rear-guards had been compelled to retire from the line of the Mincio, of which river the Austrians had forced the passage. The rear-guard of Massena, under General Pigeon, had fallen back in good order, so as to occupy Lonato; that of Augereau fled with precipitation and confusion, and failed to make a stand at Castiglione, which was occupied by Austrians, who entrenched themselves there. Valette, the general who commanded this body, was deprived of his commission in presence of his troops for misbehaviour, an example which the gallantry of the French generals rendered extremely infrequent in their service.

Wurmser became now seriously anxious about the fate of his right wing, and determined to force a communication with Quasdonowich at all risks. But he could only attain the valley of the Chiese, and the right bank of the Lago di Guarda, by breaking a passage through the divisions of Massena and Augereau.

On the 3d of August, at break of day, two divisions of Austrians, who had crossed the Mincio in pursuit of Pigeon and Valette, now directed themselves, with the most determined resolution, on the French troops, in order to clear the way between the commander-in-chief and his right wing.

The late rear-guard of Massena, which, by his counter-march, had now become his advanced-guard, was defeated, and Lonato, the place which they occupied, was taken by the Austrians, with the French artillery, and the general officer who commanded them. But the Aust. in general, thus far successful, fell into the great error of extending his line so much towards the right, in order, doubtless, if possible, to turn the French position on their left flank, thereby the sooner to open a communication with his own troops on the right bank of the Lago di Guarda, to force which had been his principal object in the attack. But in thus manœuvring he weakened his centre, an error of which Massena instantly availed himself. He formed two strong columns under Augereau, with which he redeemed the victory, by breaking through and dividing the Austrian line, and retaking Lonato at the point of the bayonet. The manœuvre is indeed a simple one, and the same by which, ten years afterwards, Buonaparte gained the battle of Austerlitz; but it requires the utmost promptitude and presence of mind to seize the exact moment for executing such a daring measure to advantage. If it is but partially successful, and the enemy retains steadiness, it is very perilous; since the attacking column, instead of flanking the broken divisions of the opposite line, may be itself flanked by decided officers and determined troops, and thus experience the disaster which it was their object to occasion to the enemy. On the present occasion, the attack on the centre completely succeeded. The Austrians, finding their line cut asunder, and their flanks pressed by the victorious columns of the French, fell into total disorder. Some, who were farthest to the right, pushed forward, in hopes to unite themselves to Quasdonowich, and what they might find remaining of the original right wing; but these were attacked in front by General Soret, who had been active in defeating Quasdonowich upon the 30th July, and were at the same time pursued by another detachment of the French, which had broken through their centre.

Such was the fate of the Austrian right at the battle of Lonato, while that of the left was no less unfavourable. They were attacked by Augereau with the utmost bravery, and driven from Castiglione, of which they had become masters by the bad conduct of Valette. Augereau achieved this important result at the price of many brave men's lives; but it was always remembered as an essential service by Buonaparte, who afterwards, when such dignities came in use, bestowed on Augereau the title of Duke of Castiglione. After their defeat, there can be nothing imagined more confused or calamitous than the condition of the Austrian divisions, who, having attacked, without resting on each other, found themselves opposed and finally overwhelmed by an enemy who appeared to possess ubiquity, simply from his activity and power of combining his forces.

A remarkable instance of their lamentable state of disorder and confusion, resembling in its consequences more than one example of the same sort, occurred at Lonato. It might, with any briskness of intelligence, or firmness of resolution, have proved a decisive advantage to their arms; it was, in its result, a humiliating illustration, how completely the succession of bad fortune had broken the spirit of the Austrian soldiers. The reader can hardly have forgotten the incident at the battle of Millesimo, when an Austrian column which had been led astray, retook, as if it were by chance, the important village of Dego;* or the more recent instance, when a body of Beaulieu's advanced guard, alike unwittingly, had nearly made Buonaparte prisoner in his quarters.† The present danger arose from the same cause, the confusion and want of combination of

* See page 308.

† See page 328.

the enemy; and now, as in the former perilous occurrences, the very same circumstances which brought on the danger, served to ward it off.

A body of four or five thousand Austrians, partly composed of those who had been cut off at the battle of Lonato, partly of stragglers from Quasdonowich, received information from the peasantry, that the French troops, having departed in every direction to improve their success, had only left a garrison of twelve hundred men in the town of Lonato. The commander of the division resolved instantly to take possession of the town, and thus to open his march to the Mincio, to join Wurmser. Now, it happened that Buonaparte himself, coming from Castiglione with only his staff for protection, had just entered Lonato. He was surprised when an Austrian officer was brought before him blindfolded, as is the custom on such occasions, who summoned the French commandant of Lonato to surrender to a superior force of Austrians, who, he stated, were already forming columns of attack to carry the place by irresistible force of numbers. Buonaparte, with admirable presence of mind, collected his numerous staff around him, caused the officer's eyes to be unbandaged, that he might see in whose presence he stood, and upbraided him with the insolence of which he had been guilty, in bringing a summons of surrender to the French commander-in-chief in the middle of his army. The credulous officer, recognizing the presence of Buonaparte, and believing it impossible that he could be there without at least a strong division of his army, stammered out an apology, and returned to persuade his dispirited commander to surrender himself, and the four thousand men and upwards whom he commanded, to the comparatively small force which occupied Lonato. They grounded their arms accordingly, to one-fourth of their number, and missed an inviting and easy opportunity of carrying Buonaparte prisoner to Wurmser's head-quarters.

The Austrian general himself, whose splendid army was thus destroyed in detail, had been hitherto employed in revictualling Mantua, and throwing in supplies of every kind; besides which, a large portion of his army had been detached in the vain pursuit of Serrurier, and the troops lately engaged in the siege, who had retreated towards Marcaria. When Wurmser learned the disasters of his right wing, and the destruction of the troops despatched to form a communication with it, he sent to recall the division which we have mentioned, and advanced against the French position between Lonato and Castiglione, with an army still numerous, notwithstanding the reverses which it had sustained. But Buonaparte had not left the interval unimproved. He had recalled Serrurier from Marcaria, to assail the left wing and the flank of the Austrian Field-marshal. The opening of Serrurier's fire was a signal for a general attack on all points of Wurmser's line. He was defeated, and nearly made prisoner; and it was not till after suffering great losses in the retreat and pursuit, that he gained with difficulty Trent and Roveredo, the positions adjacent to the Tyrol, from which he had so lately sallied with such confidence of victory. He had lost perhaps one half of his fine army, and the only consolation which remained was, that he had thrown supplies into the fortress of Mantua. His troops also no longer had the masculine confidence which is necessary to success in war. They were no longer proud of themselves and of their commanders; and those, especially, who had sustained so many losses under Beaulieu, could hardly be brought to do their duty, in circumstances where it seemed that Destiny itself was fighting against them.

The Austrians are supposed to have lost nearly forty thousand men in these disastrous battles. The French must have at least suffered the loss of one-fourth of the number, though Buonaparte confesses only to seven thousand men; and their army, desperately fatigued by so many marches, such constant fighting, and the hardships of a campaign, where even the general for seven days never laid aside his clothes, or took any regular repose, required some time to recover their physical strength.

Meantime, Napoleon resumed his position before Mantua; but the want of battering cannon, and the commencement of the unhealthy heats of Autumn, amid lakes and inundations, besides the great chance of a second attack on the part of Wurmser, induced him to limit his measures to a simple blockade, which, however, was so strict as to retain the garrison within the walls of the place, and cut them off even from the islet called the Seraglio.

The events of this hurried campaign threw light on the feelings of the different states of Italy. Lombardy in general remained quiet, and the citizens of Milan seemed so well affected to the French, that Buonaparte, after the victory of Castiglione, returned them his thanks in name of the Republic. But at Pavia, and elsewhere, a very opposite disposition was evinced; and at Ferrara, the Cardinal Mattei, Archbishop of that town, made some progress in exciting an insurrection. His apology, when introduced to Buonaparte's presence to answer for his conduct, consisted in uttering the single word, *Peccavi!* and Napoleon, soothed by his submission, imposed no punishment on him for his offence, but, on the contrary, used his mediation in some negotiations with the court of Rome. Yet though the Bishop of Ferrara, overawed and despised, was permitted to escape, the conduct of his superior, the Pope, who had shown vacillation in his purposes of submission, when he heard of the temporary raising of the siege of Mantua, was carefully noted and remembered for animadversion, when a suitable moment should occur.

Nothing is more remarkable, during these campaigns, than the inflexibility of Austria, which, reduced to the extremity of distress by the advance of Moreau and Jourdan into her territories, stood nevertheless on the defensive at every point, and by extraordinary exertions again recruited Wurmser with fresh troops, to the amount of twenty thousand men; which reinforcement enabled that general, though under no more propitious star, again to resume the offensive, by advancing from the Tyrol. Wurmser, with less confidence than before, hoped now to relieve the siege of Mantua a second time, and at a less desperate cost, by moving from Trent towards Mantua, through the defiles formed by the river Brenta. This manœuvre he proposed to execute with thirty thousand men, while he left twenty thousand, under General Davidowich, in a strong position at or near Roveredo, for the purpose of covering the Tyrol; an invasion of which district, on the part of the French, must have added much to the general panic which already astounded Germany, from the apprehended advance of Moreau and Jourdan from the banks of the Rhine.

Buonaparte penetrated the design of the veteran general, and suffered him without disturbance to march towards Bassano upon the Brenta, in order to occupy the line of operations on which he intended to manœuvre, with the secret intention that he would himself assume the offensive, and overwhelm Davidowich as soon as the distance betwixt them precluded a communication betwixt that general and Wurmser. He left General Kilmaine, an officer of Irish extraction in whom he reposed confidence, with about three thousand men, to cover the siege of Mantua, by posting himself under the walls of Verona, while, concentrating a strong body of forces, Napoleon marched upon the town of Roveredo, situated in the valley of the Adige, and having in its rear the strong position of Calliano. The town is situated on the high road to Trent, and Davidowich lay there with twenty-five thousand Austrians, intended to protect the Tyrol, while Wurmser moved down the Brenta, which runs in the same direction with the Adige, but at about thirty miles' distance, so that no communication for mutual support could take place between Wurmser and his lieutenant-general. It was upon Davidowich that Buonaparte first meant to pour his thunder.

The battle of Roveredo, fought upon the fourth of September, was one of that great general's splendid days. Before he could approach the town, one of his divisions had to force the strongly entrenched camp of Mori, where the enemy made a desperate defence. Another attacked the Austrians on the op-

posite bank of the Adige, (for the action took place on both sides of the river,) until the enemy at length retreated, still fighting desperately. Napoleon sent his orders to General Dubois, to charge with the first regiment of hussars—he did so, and broke the enemy, but fell mortally wounded with three balls. “I die,” he said, “for the Republic—bring me but tidings that the victory is certain.”

The retreating enemy were driven through the town of Roveredo, without having it in their power to make a stand. The extreme strength of the position of Calliano seemed to afford them rallying ground. The Adige is there bordered by precipitous mountains, approaching so near its course, as only to leave a pass of forty toises breadth between the river and the precipice, which opening was defended by a village, a castle, and a strong defensive wall resting upon the rock, all well garnished with artillery. The French, in their enthusiasm of victory, could not be stopped even by these obstacles. Eight pieces of light artillery were brought forward, under cover of which the infantry charged and carried this strong position; so little do natural advantages avail when the minds of the assailants are influenced with an opinion that they are irresistible, and those of the defenders are depressed by a uniform and uninterrupted course of defeat. Six or seven thousand prisoners, and fifteen pieces of cannon captured, were the fruits of this splendid victory; and Massena the next morning took possession of Trent in the Tyrol, so long the strong-hold where Wurmser had maintained his head-quarters.

The wrecks of Davidowich's army fled deeper into the Tyrol, and took up their position at Lavis, a small village on a river of a similar name, about three leagues to the northward of Trent, and situated in the principal road which communicates with Brixen and Inspruck. Buonaparte instantly pursued them with a division of his army, commanded by Vaubois, and passed the Lavis with his cavalry, while the enemy were amused with an assault upon the bridge. Thus he drove them from their position, which, being the entrance of one of the chief defiles of the Tyrol, it was of importance to secure, and it was occupied accordingly by Vaubois with his victorious division.

Buonaparte, in consequence of his present condition, became desirous to conciliate the martial inhabitants of the Tyrol, and published a proclamation, in which he exhorted them to lay down their arms, and return to their homes; assuring them of protection against military violence, and labouring to convince them, that they had themselves no interest in the war, which he waged against the Emperor and his government, but not against his subjects. That his conduct might appear to be of a piece with his reasoning, Napoleon issued an edict, disuniting the principality of Trent from the German empire, and annexing it in point of sovereignty to the French Republic, while he intrusted, or seemed to intrust, the inhabitants themselves, with the power of administering their own laws and government.

Bounties which depended on the gift of an armed enemy, appeared very suspicious to the Tyrolese, who were aware that in fact the order of a French officer would be more effectual law, whenever that nation had the power, than that of any administrator of civil affairs whom they might themselves be permitted to choose. As for the proclamation, the French general might as well have wasted his eloquence on the rocks of the country. The Tyrol, one of the earliest possessions of the House of Austria, had been uniformly governed by those princes with strict respect to the privileges of the inhabitants, who were possessed already of complete personal freedom. Secured in all the immunities which were necessary for their comfort, these sagacious peasants saw nothing to expect from the hand of a stranger general, excepting what Buonaparte himself has termed, those vexations necessarily annexed to a country which becomes the seat of war, and which, in more full detail, include whatever the avarice of the general, the necessities of the soldiers, not to men-

tion the more violent outrage of marauders and plunderers, may choose to exact from the inhabitants. But, besides this prudent calculation of consequences, the Tyrolese felt the generous spirit of national independence, and resolved that their mountains should not be dishonoured by the march of an armed enemy, if the unerring rifle-guns of their children were able to protect their native soil from such indignity. Every mode of resistance was prepared; and it was then that those piles of rocks, stones, and trunks of trees, were collected on the verge of the precipices which line the valley of the Inn, and other passes of the Tyrol, but which remained in grim repose till rolled down, to the utter annihilation of the French and Bavarian invaders in 1809, under the directions of the valiant Hoffer and his companions in arms.

More successful with the sword than the pen, Buonaparte had no sooner disposed of Davidowich and his army, than he began his operations against Wurmser himself, who had by this time learned the total defeat of his subordinate division, and that the French were possessed of Trent. The Austrian Field-marshal immediately conceived that the French general, in consequence of his successes, would be disposed to leave Italy behind, and advance to Inspruck, in order to communicate with the armies of Moreau and Jourdan, which were now on the full advance into Germany. Instead, therefore, of renouncing his own scheme of relieving Mantua, Wurmser thought the time favourable for carrying it into execution; and in place of falling back with his army on Friuli, and thus keeping open his communication with Vienna, he committed the great error of involving himself still deeper in the Italian passes to the southward, by an attempt, with a diminished force, to execute a purpose, which he had been unable to accomplish when his army was double the strength of the French. With this ill-chosen plan, he detached Mezaros with a division of his forces, to manœuvre on Verona, where, as we have seen, Buonaparte had stationed Kilmaine, to cover the siege, or rather the blockade, of Mantua. Mezaros departed accordingly, and leaving Wurmser at Bassano on the Brenta, marched south-westward towards the collateral valley of the Adige, and attacked Kilmaine, who, by drawing his men under cover of the fortifications of Verona, made a resolute defence. The Austrian general, finding it impossible to carry the place by a coup-de-main, was meditating to cross the Adige, when he was recalled by the most urgent commands to rejoin Wurmser with all possible despatch.

As soon as Buonaparte learned this new separation of Wurmser from a large division of his army, he anticipated the possibility of defeating the Field-marshal himself, driving him from his position at Bassano, and of consequence, cutting off at his leisure the division of Mezaros, which had advanced so far to the southward as effectually to compromise its safety.

To execute this plan required the utmost rapidity of movement; for, should Wurmser learn that Buonaparte was advancing towards Bassano, in time to recall Mezaros, he might present a front too numerous to be attacked with hope of success. There are twenty leagues' distance betwixt Trent and Bassano, and that ground was to be traversed by means of very difficult roads, in the space of two days at farthest. But it was in such circumstances that the genius of Napoleon triumphed, through the enthusiastic power which he possessed over the soldiery, and by which he could urge them to the most incredible exertions. He left Trent on the 6th September at break of day, and reached, in the course of the evening, Borgo di Val Lugano, a march of ten French leagues. A similar forced march of five leagues and upwards, brought him up with Wurmser's advanced-guard, which was strongly posted at Primolano.

The effect of the surprise, and the impetuosity of the French attack, surmounted all the advantages of position. The Austrian double lines were penetrated by a charge of three French columns—the cavalry occupied the high road, and cut off the enemy's retreat on Bassano—in a word, Wurmser's van-

guard was totally destroyed, and more than four thousand men laid down their arms. From Primolano the French, dislodging whatever enemies they encountered, advanced to Cismone, a village, where a river of the same name unites with the Brenta. There they halted, exhausted with fatigue; and on that evening no sentinel in the army endured more privations than Napoleon himself, who took up his quarters for the night without either staff-officers or baggage, and was glad to accept a share of a private soldier's ration of bread, of which the poor fellow lived to remind his general when he was become Emperor.

Cismone is only about four leagues from Bassano, and Wurmser heard with alarm, that the French leader, whom he conceived to be already deeply engaged in the Tyrolese passes, had destroyed his vanguard, and was menacing his own position. It was under this alarm that he despatched expresses, as already mentioned, to recall Mezaros and his division. But it was too late; for that general was under the walls of Verona, nigh fifteen leagues from Wurmser's position, on the night of the 7th September, when the French army was at Cismone, within a third part of that distance. The utmost exertions of Mezaros could only bring his division as far as Montebello, upon the 8th September, when the battle of Bassano seemed to decide the fate of his unfortunate commander-in-chief.

This victory was as decisive as any which Buonaparte had hitherto obtained. The village of Salagna was first carried by main force, and then the French army, continuing to descend the defiles of the Brenta, attacked Wurmser's main body, which still lay under his own command in the town of Bassano. Augereau penetrated into the town upon the right, Massena upon the left. They bore down all opposition, and seized the cannon by which the bridge was defended, in spite of the efforts of the Austrian grenadiers, charged with the duty of protecting Wurmser and his staff, who were now in absolute flight.

The Field-marshal himself, with the military chest of his army, nearly fell into the hands of the French; and though he escaped for the time, it was after an almost general dispersion of his troops. Six thousand Austrians surrendered to Buonaparte; Quasdonowich, with three or four thousand men, effected a retreat to the north-east, and gained Friuli; while Wurmser himself, finding it impossible to escape otherwise, fled to Vicenza in the opposite direction, and there united the scattered forces which still followed him, with the division of Mezaros. When this junction was accomplished, the aged Marshal had still the command of about sixteen thousand men, out of sixty thousand, with whom he had, scarce a week before, commenced the campaign. The material part of his army, guns, waggons, and baggage, was all lost—his retreat upon the hereditary states of Austria was entirely cut off—the flower of his army was destroyed—courage and confidence were gone—there seemed no remedy but that he should lay down his arms to the youthful conqueror by whose forces he was now surrounded on all sides, without, as it appeared, any possibility of extricating himself. But Fate itself seemed to take some tardy compassion on this venerable and gallant veteran, and not only adjourned his final fall, but even granted him leave to gather some brief-dated laurels, as the priests of old were wont to garland their victims before the final sacrifice.

Surrounded by dangers, and cut off from any other retreat, Wurmser formed the gallant determination to throw himself and his remaining forces into Mantua, and share the fate of the beleagured fortress which he had vainly striven to relieve. But to execute this purpose it was necessary to cross the Adige, nor was it easy to say how this was to be accomplished. Verona, one point of passage, was defended by Kilmaine, who had already repulsed Mezaros. Legnago, where there was a bridge, was also garrisoned by the French; and Wurmser had lost his bridge of pontoons at the battle of Bassano. At the village of Albarado, however, there was an established ferry, totally insufficient

for passing over so considerable a force with the necessary despatch, but which Wurmser used for the purpose of sending across two squadrons of cavalry, in order to reconnoitre the blockade of Mantua, and the facilities which might present themselves for accomplishing a retreat on that fortress. This precaution proved for the time the salvation of Wurmser, and what remained of his army.

Fortune, which has such influence in warlike affairs, had so ordered it, that Kilmaine, apprehending that Wurmser would attempt to force a passage at Verona, and desirous to improve his means of resistance against so great a force, had sent orders that the garrison of four hundred men who guarded the bridge at Legnago should join him at Verona, and that an equal number should be detached from the blockade of Mantua, to supply their place on the Lower Adige. The former part of his command had been obeyed, and the garrison of Legnago were on their march for Verona. But the relief which was designed to occupy their post, though on their way to Legnago, had not yet arrived. The Austrian cavalry, who had passed over at Albarado, encountering this body on its march from the vicinity of Mantua, attacked them with spirit, and sabred a good many. The commander of the French battalion, confounded at this appearance, concluded that the whole Austrian army had gained the right bank of the Adige, and that he should necessarily be cut off if he prosecuted his march to Legnago. Thus the passage at that place was left altogether undefended; and Wurmser, apprised of this unlooked-for chance of escape, occupied the village, and took possession of the bridge.

Buonaparte, in the meantime, having moved from Bassano to Arcola in pursuit of the defeated enemy, learned at the latter place that Wurmser still lingered at Legnago, perhaps to grant his troops some indispensable repose, perhaps to watch whether it might be even yet possible to give the slip to the French divisions by which he was surrounded, and, by a rapid march back upon Padua, to regain his communication with the Austrian territories, instead of inclosing himself in Mantua. Buonaparte hastened to avail himself of these moments of indecision. Augereau was ordered to march upon Legnago by the road from Padua, so as to cut off any possibility of Wurmser's retreat in that direction; while Massena's division was thrown across the Adige by a ferry at Ronco, to strengthen General Kilmaine, who had already occupied the line of a small river called the Molinella, which intersects the country between Legnago and Mantua. If this position could be made good, it was concluded that the Austrian general, unable to reach Mantua, or to maintain himself at Legnago, must even yet surrender himself and his army.

On the 12th September, Wurmser began his march. He was first opposed at Corea, where Murat and Pigeon had united their forces. But Wurmser made his dispositions, and attacked with a fury which swept out of the way both the cavalry and infantry of the enemy, and obtained possession of the village. In the heat of the skirmish, and just when the French were giving way, Buonaparte himself entered Corea, with the purpose of personally superintending the dispositions made for intercepting the retreat of Wurmser, when, but for the speed of his horse, he had nearly fallen as a prisoner into the hands of the general whose destruction he was labouring to insure. Wurmser arrived on the spot a few minutes afterwards, and gave orders for a pursuit in every direction; commanding, however, that the French general should, if possible, be taken alive—a conjunction of circumstances worthy of remark, since it authorised the Austrian general for the moment to pronounce on the fate of him, who, before and after, was the master of his destiny.

Having again missed this great prize, Wurmser continued his march all night, and turning aside from the great road, where the blockading army had taken measures to intercept him, he surprised a small bridge over the Molinella, at a village called Villa Impenta, by which he eluded encountering the forces of Kilmaine. A body of French horse, sent to impede his progress, was cut to

pieces by the Austrian cavalry. On the 14th, Wurmser obtained a similar success at Castel-Dui, where his cuirassiers destroyed a body of French infantry; and having now forced himself into a communication with Mantua, he encamped between the suburb of Saint George and the citadel, and endeavoured to keep open the communication with the country, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of forage and provisions.

But it was not Buonaparte's intention to leave him undisturbed in so commodious a position. Having received the surrender of an Austrian corps which was left in Porto Legnago, and gleaned up such other remnants of Wurmser's army as could not accompany their general in his rapid march to Mantua, he resolved once more to force his way into the islet of the Seraglio, upon which Mantua is built, and confine the besieged within the walls of their garrison. On the 15th, after a very severe and bloody action, the French obtained possession of the suburb of Saint George, and the citadel termed La Favorita, and a long series of severe sallies and attacks took place, which, although gallantly fought by the Austrians, generally tended to their disadvantage, so that they were finally again blockaded within the walls of the city and castle.

The woes of war now appeared among them in a different and even more hideous form than when inflicted with the sword alone. When Wurmser threw himself into Mantua, the garrison might amount to twenty-six thousand men; yet ere October was far advanced, there were little above the half of the number fit for service. There were nearly nine thousand sick in the hospitals, —infectious diseases, privations of every kind, and the unhealthy air of the lakes and marshes with which they were surrounded, had cut off the remainder. The French also had lost great numbers; but the conquerors could reckon up their victories, and forget the price at which they had been purchased.

It was a proud vaunt, and a cure in itself for many losses, that the Minister of War had a right to make the following speech to the Directory, at the formal introduction of Marmont, then aid-de-camp of Buonaparte, and commissioned to present on his part the colours and standards taken from the enemy:—"In the course of a single campaign," he truly said, "Italy had been entirely conquered—three large armies had been entirely destroyed—more than fifty stand of colours had been taken by the victors—forty thousand Austrians had laid down their arms—and, what was not the least surprising part of the whole, these deeds had been accomplished by an army of only thirty thousand Frenchmen, commanded by a general scarce twenty-six years old."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Corsica re-united with France.—Critical situation of Buonaparte in Italy at this period.—The Austrian General Alvinzi placed at the head of a new Army.—Various Contests, attended with no decisive result.—Want of concert among the Austrian Generals.—French Army begin to murmur.—First Battle of Arcola.—Napoleon in personal danger.—No decisive result.—Second Battle of Arcola.—The French victorious.—Fresh want of concert among the Austrian Generals.—General Views of Military and Political Affairs, after the conclusion of the fourth Italian Campaign.—Austria commences a fifth Campaign—but has not profited by experience.—Battle of Rivoli, and Victory of the French.—Further successful at La Favorita.—French regain their lost ground in Italy.—Surrender of Mantua.—Instances of Napoleon's Generosity.

ABOUT this period the re-union of Corsica with France took place. Buonaparte contributed to this change in the political relations of his native country indirectly, in part by the high pride which his countrymen must have originally

taken in his splendid career; and he did so more immediately, by seizing the town and port of Leghorn, and assisting those Corsicans, who had been exiled by the English party, to return to their native island. He intimated the event to the Directory, and stated that he had appointed Gentili, the principal partisan of the French, to govern the island provisionally; and that the Commissioner Salicetti was to set sail for the purpose of making other necessary arrangements. The communication is coldly made, nor does Buonaparte's love of his birth-place induce him to expatiate upon its importance, although the Directory afterwards made the acquisition of that island a great theme of exultation. But his destinies had called him to too high an elevation to permit his distinguishing the obscure islet which he had arisen from originally. He was like the young lion, who, while he is scattering the herds and destroying the hunters, thinks little of the forest-cave in which he first saw the light.*

Indeed Buonaparte's situation, however brilliant, was at the same time critical, and required his undivided thoughts. Mantua still held out, and was likely to do so. Wurmser had caused about three-fourths of the horses belonging to his cavalry to be killed and salted for the use of the garrison, and thus made a large addition, such as it was, to the provisions of the place. His character for courage and determination was completely established; and being now engaged in defending a fortress by ordinary rules of art, which he perfectly understood, he was in no danger of being over-reached and out-manceuvred by the new system of tactics, which occasioned his misfortunes in the open field.

While, therefore, the last pledge of Austria's dominions in Italy was confided to such safe custody, the Emperor and his ministers were eagerly engaged in making a new effort to recover their Italian territories. The defeat of Jourdan, and the retreat of Moreau before the Archduke Charles, had given the Imperialists some breathing time, and enabled them, by extensive levies in the warlike province of Illyria, as well as draughts from the army of the Rhine, to take the field with a new army, for the recovery of the Italian provinces, and the relief of Mantua. By orders of the Aulic Council, two armies were assembled on the Italian frontier; one at Friuli, which was partly composed of that portion of the army of Wurmser, which, cut off from their main body at the battle of Bassano, had effected, under Quasdonowich, a retreat in that direction; the other was to be formed on the Tyrol. They were to operate in conjunction, and both were placed under the command of Marshal Alvinzi, an officer of high reputation, which was then thought merited.

Thus, for the fourth time, Buonaparte was to contest the same objects on the same ground, with new forces belonging to the same enemy. He had, indeed, himself, received from France reinforcements to the number of twelve battalions, from those troops which had been formerly employed in La Vendée. The army, in general, since victory had placed the resources of the rich country which they occupied at the command of their leader, had been well supplied with clothes, food, and provisions, and were devotedly attached to the chief who had conducted them from starving on the barren Alps into this land of plenty, and had directed their military efforts with such skill, that they could scarce ever be said to have failed of success in whatever they undertook under his direction.

* We have said (p. 280.) that Buonaparte never distinguished his native country after his high exaltation, and did not of course possess the affection of the inhabitants in a strong degree. But in his *Memoirs*, while at St Helena, he gives a sketch of the geographical description and history of Corsica, and suggests several plans for civilization of his countrymen,—one of which, the depriving them of the arms which they constantly wear, might be prudent were it practicable but certainly would be highly unpalatable. There is an odd observation, "that the Crown of Corsica must, on the temporary annexation of the island to Great Britain, have been surprised at finding itself appertaining to the successor of Fingal." Not more we should think than the disdem of France, and the Iron Crown of Italy, may have marvelled at meeting on the brow of a Corsican soldier of fortune.

Napoleon had also on his side the good wishes, if not of the Italians in general, of a considerable party, especially in Lombardy, and friends and enemies were alike impressed with belief in his predestined success. During the former attempts of Wurmser, a contrary opinion had prevailed, and the news that the Austrians were in motion, had given birth to insurrections against the French in many places, and to the publication of sentiments unfavourable to them almost everywhere. But now, when all predicted the certain success of Napoleon, the friends of Austria remained quiet, and the numerous party who desire in such cases to keep on the winning side, added weight to the actual friends of France, by expressing their opinions in her favour. It seems, however, that Victory, as if displeased that mortals should presume to calculate the motives of so fickle a deity, was, on this occasion, disposed to be more coy than formerly even to her greatest favourite, and to oblige him to toil harder than he had done even when the odds were more against him.

Davidowich commanded the body of the Austrians which was in the Tyrol, and which included the fine militia of that martial province. There was little difficulty in prevailing on them to advance into Italy, convinced as they were that there was small security for their national independence while the French remained in possession of Lombardy. Buonaparte, on the other hand, had placed Vaubois in the passes upon the river Lavis, above Trent, to cover that new possession of the French Republic, and check the advance of Davidowich. It was the plan of Alvinzi to descend from Friuli, and approach Vicenza, to which place he expected Davidowich might penetrate by a corresponding movement down the Adige. Having thus brought his united army into activity, his design was to advance on Mantua, the constant object of bloody contention. He commenced his march in the beginning of October 1796.

As soon as Buonaparte heard that Alvinzi was in motion, he sent orders to Vaubois to attack Davidowich, and to Massena to advance to Bassano upon the Brenta, and make head against the Austrian commander-in-chief. Both measures failed in effect.

Vaubois indeed made his attack, but so unsuccessfully, that after two days' fighting he was compelled to retreat before the Austrians, to evacuate the city of Trent, and to retreat upon Calliano, already mentioned as a very strong position, in the previous account of the battle of Roveredo.* A great part of his opponents being Tyrolese, and admirably calculated for mountain warfare, they forced Vaubois from a situation which was almost impregnable; and their army, descending the Adige upon the right bank, appeared to manœuvre with the purpose of marching on Montebaldo and Rivoli, and thus opening the communication with Alvinzi.

On the other hand, though Massena had sustained no loss, for he avoided an engagement, the approach of Alvinzi, with a superior army, compelled him to evacuate Bassano, and to leave the enemy in undisputed possession of the valley of the Brenta. Buonaparte, therefore, himself, saw the necessity of advancing with Augereau's division, determined to give battle to Alvinzi, and force him back on the Piave before the arrival of Davidowich. But he experienced unusual resistance; and it is amid complaints of the weather, of misadventures and miscarriages of different sorts, that he faintly claims the name of a victory for his first encounter with Alvinzi. It is clear that he had made a desperate attempt to drive the Austrian general from Bassano—that he had not succeeded; but, on the contrary, was under the necessity of retreating to Vicenza. It is further manifest, that Buonaparte was sensible this retreat did not accord well with his claim of victory; and he says, with a consciousness which is amusing, that the inhabitants of Vicenza were surprised to see the French army retire through their town, as they had been witnesses of their victory on the preceding

day. No doubt there was room for astonishment, if the Vicenzans had been as completely convinced of the fact as Buonaparte represents them. The truth was, Buonaparte was sensible that Vaubois, being in complete retreat, was exposed to be cut off unless he was supported, and he hastened to prevent so great a loss, by meeting and reinforcing him. His own retrograde movement, however, which extended as far as Verona, left the whole country betwixt the Brenta and Adige open to the Austrians; nor does there occur, to those who read the account of the campaign, any good reason why Davidowich and Alvinzi, having no body of French to interrupt their communication, should not instantly have adjusted their operations on a common basis. But it was the bane of the Austrian tactics, through the whole war, to neglect that connexion and co-operation betwixt their separate divisions, which is essential to secure the general result of a campaign. Above all, as Buonaparte himself remarked of them, their leaders were not sufficiently acquainted with the value of time in military movements.

Napoleon having retreated to Verona, where he could at pleasure assume the offensive by means of the bridge, or place the Adige between himself and the enemy, visited, in the first place, the positions of Rivoli and Corona, where were stationed the troops which had been defeated by Davidowich.

They appeared before him with dejected countenances, and Napoleon upbraided them with their indifferent behaviour. "You have displeased me," he said;—"You have shown neither discipline, nor constancy, nor bravery. You have suffered yourselves to be driven from positions where a handful of brave men might have arrested the progress of a large army. You are no longer French soldiers.—Let it be written on their colours—'They are not of the Army of Italy.' " Tears, and groans of sorrow and shame, answered this harangue—the rules of discipline could not stifle their sense of mortification, and several of the grenadiers, who had deserved and wore marks of distinction, called out from the ranks—"General, we have been misrepresented—Place us in the advance, and you may then judge whether we do not belong to the Army of Italy." Buonaparte having produced the necessary effect, spoke to them in a more conciliatory tone; and the regiments who had undergone so severe a rebuke, redeemed their character in the subsequent part of the campaign.

While Napoleon was indefatigable in concentrating his troops on the right bank of the Adige, and inspiring them with his own spirit of enterprise, Alvinzi had taken his position on the left bank, nearly opposite to Verona. His army occupied a range of heights called Caldiero, on the left of which, and somewhat in the rear, is the little village of Arcola, situated among marshes, which extend around the foot of that eminence. Here the Austrian general had stationed himself, with a view, it may be supposed, to wait until Davidowich and his division should descend the right bank of the Adige, disquiet the French leader's position on that river, and give Alvinzi himself the opportunity of forcing a passage.

Buonaparte, with his usual rapidity of resolution, resolved to drive the Austrian from his position on Caldiero, before the arrival of Davidowich. But neither on this occasion was fortune propitious to him. A strong French division, under Massena, attacked the heights amid a storm of rain; but their most strenuous exertions proved completely unsuccessful, and left to the general only his usual mode of concealing a check, by railing at the elements.

The situation of the French became critical, and, what was worse, the soldiers perceived it; and complained that they had to sustain the whole burden of the war, had to encounter army after army, and must succumb at last under the renewed and unwearied efforts of Austria. Buonaparte parried these natural feelings as well as he could, promising that their conquest of Italy should be speedily sealed by the defeat of this Alvinzi; and he applied his whole genius to discover the means of bringing the war to an effective struggle, in which he

confided that, in spite of numbers, his own talents, and the enterprising character of an army so often victorious, might assure him a favourable result. But it was no easy way to discover a mode of attacking, with even plausible hopes of success. If he advanced northward on the right bank to seek out and destroy Davidowich, he must weaken his line on the Adige, by the troops withdrawn to effect that purpose; and during his absence, Alvinzi would probably force the passage of the river at some point, and thus have it in his power to relieve Mantua. The heights of Caldiero, occupied by the Austrian main-body, and lying in his front, had, by dire experiment, been proved impregnable.

In these doubtful circumstances the bold scheme occurred to the French general, that the position of Caldiero, though it could not be stormed, might be turned, and that by possessing himself of the village of Arcola, which lies to the left, and in the rear of Caldiero, the Austrians might be compelled to fight to disadvantage. But the idea of attacking Arcola was one which would scarce have occurred to any general save Buonaparte.

Arcola is situated upon a small stream called the Alpon, which, as already hinted, finds its way into the Adige, through a wilderness of marshes, intersected with ditches, and traversed by dikes in various directions. In case of an unsuccessful attack, the assailants were like to be totally cut off in the swamps. Then to debouche from Verona, and move in the direction of Arcola, would have put Alvinzi and his whole army on their guard. Secrecy and celerity are the soul of enterprise. All these difficulties gave way before Napoleon's genius.

Verona, it must be remembered, is on the left bank of the Adige—on the same with the point which was the object of Buonaparte's attack. At night-fall, the whole forces at Verona were under arms; and leaving fifteen hundred men under Kilmaine to defend the place from any assault, with strict orders to secure the gates, and prevent all communication of his nocturnal expedition to the enemy, Buonaparte commenced his march at first to the rear, in the direction of Peschiera; which seemed to imply that his resolution was at length taken to resign the hopes of gaining Mantua, and perhaps to abandon Italy. The silence with which the march was conducted, the absence of all the usual rumours which used in the French army to precede a battle, and the discouraging situation of affairs, appeared to presage the same issue. But after the troops had marched a little way in this direction, the heads of columns were wheeled to the left, out of the line of retreat, and descended the Adige as far as Ronco, which they reached before day. Here a bridge had been prepared, by which they passed over the river, and were placed on the same bank with Arcola, the object of their attack, and lower than the heights of Caldiero.

There were three causeways by which the marsh of Arcola is traversed—each was occupied by a French column. The central column moved on the causeway which led to the village so named. The dikes and causeways were not defended, but Arcola and its bridge were protected by two battalions of Croats with two pieces of cannon, which were placed in a position to enfilade the causeway. These received the French column with so heavy a fire on its flank, that it fell back in disorder. Augereau rushed forward upon the bridge with his chosen grenadiers; but, enveloped as they were in a destructive fire, they were driven back on the main body.

Alvinzi, who conceived it only an affair of light troops, sent, however, forces into the marsh by means of the dikes which traversed them, to drive out the French. These were checked by finding that they were to oppose strong columns of infantry, yet the battle continued with unabated vigour. It was essential to Buonaparte's plan that Arcola should be carried; but the fire continued tremendous. At length, to animate his soldiers to a final exertion, he caught a stand of colours, rushed on the bridge, and planted them there with his own hand. A fresh body of Austrians arrived at that moment, and the

fire on flank blazed more destructively than ever. The rear of the French column fell back; the leading files, finding themselves unsupported, gave way, but, still careful of their general, bore him back in their arms through the dead and dying, the fire and the smoke. In the confusion he was at length pushed into the marsh. The Austrians were already betwixt him and his own troops, and he must have perished or been taken had not the grenadiers perceived his danger. The cry instantly arose,—“Forward—forward—save the general!” Their love to Buonaparte’s person did more than even his commands and example had been able to accomplish. They returned to the charge, and at length pushed the Austrians out of the village; but not till the appearance of a French corps under General Guieux had turned the position, and he had thrown himself in the rear of it. These succours had passed at the ferry of Alborado, and the French remained in possession of the long-contested village. It was at the moment a place of the greatest importance; for the possession of it would have enabled Buonaparte, had the Austrians remained in their position, to operate on their communications with the Brenta, interpose between Alvinzi and his reserves, and destroy his park of artillery. But the risk was avoided by the timely caution of the Austrian Field-marshal.

Alvinzi was no sooner aware that a great division of the French army was in his rear, than, without allowing them time for farther operations, he instantly broke up his position on Caldiero, and evacuated these heights by a steady and orderly retreat. Buonaparte had the mortification to see the Austrians effect this manœuvre by crossing a bridge in their rear over the Alpon, and which could he have occupied, as was his purpose, he might have rendered their retreat impossible, or at least disastrous. As matters stood, however, the village of Arcola came to lose its consequence as a position, since, after Alvinzi’s retreat, it was no longer in the rear, but in the front of the enemy.

Buonaparte remembered he had enemies on the right as well as on the left of the Adige; and that Davidowich might be once more routing Vaubois, while he was too far advanced to afford him assistance. He therefore evacuated Arcola, and the village of Porcil, situated near it, and retreating to Ronco, re-crossed the river, leaving only two demi-brigades in advance upon the left bank.

The first battle of Arcola, famous for the obstinacy with which it was disputed, and the number of brave officers and men who fell, was thus attended with no decisive result. But it had checked the inclination of Alvinzi to advance on Verona—it had delayed all communication betwixt his army and that of the Tyrol—above all, it had renewed the Austrians’ apprehensions of the skill of Buonaparte and the bravery of his troops, and restored to the French soldiery the usual confidence of their national character.

Buonaparte remained stationary at Ronco until next morning at five o’clock, by which time he received intelligence that Davidowich had lain quiet in his former position; that he had no cause to be alarmed for Vaubois’ safety, and might therefore operate in security against Alvinzi. This was rendered the more easy, (16th November,) as the Austrian general, not aware of Buonaparte’s having halted his army at Ronco, imagined he was on his march to concentrate his forces nearer Mantua, and hastened therefore to overwhelm the rear-guard, whom he expected to find at the ferry. Buonaparte spared them the trouble of a close advance to the Adige. He again crossed to the left side, and again advanced his columns upon the dikes and causeways which traversed the marshes of Arcola. On such ground, where it was impossible to assign to the columns more breadth than the causeways could accommodate, the victorious soldiers of France had great advantage over the recent levies of Austria; for though the latter might be superior in number on the whole, success must in such a case depend on the personal superiority of the front or leading files only. The French, therefore, had the first advantage, and drove back the

Austrians upon the village of Arcola; but here, as on the former day, Alvinzi constituted his principal point of defence, and maintained it with the utmost obstinacy.

After having repeatedly failed when attacking in front a post so difficult of approach, Napoleon endeavoured to turn the position by crossing the little river Alpon, near its union with the Adige. He attempted to effect a passage by means of fascines, but unsuccessfully; and the night approached without anything effectual being decided. Both parties drew off, the French to Ronco, where they re-crossed the Adige; the Austrians to a position behind the well-contested village of Arcola.

The battle of the 16th November was thus far favourable to the French, that they had driven back the Austrians, and made many prisoners in the commencement of the day; but they had also lost many men; and Napoleon, if he had gained ground in the day, was fain to return to his position at night, lest Davidowich, by the defeat of Vaubois, might either relieve Mantua, or move on Verona. The 17th was to be a day more decisive.

The field of battle, and the preliminary manœuvres, were much the same as on the preceding day; but those of the French were nearly disconcerted by the sinking of one of the boats which constituted their bridge over the Adige. The Austrians instantly advanced on the demi-brigade which had been stationed on the left bank to defend the bridge. But the French, having repaired the damage, advanced in their turn, and compelled the Austrians to retreat upon the marsh. Massena directed his attack on Porcil—General Robert pressed forwards on Arcola. But it was at the point where he wished to cross the Alpon that Buonaparte chiefly desired to attain a decided superiority; and in order to win it, he added stratagem to audacity. Observing one of his columns repulsed, and retreating along the causeway, he placed the 32d regiment in ambuscade in a thicket of willows which bordered the rivulet, and saluting the pursuing enemy with a close, heavy, and unexpected fire, instantly rushed to close with the bayonet, and attacking the flank of a column of nearly three thousand Croats, forced them into the marsh, where most of them perished.

It was now that, after a calculation of the losses sustained by the enemy, Napoleon conceived their numerical superiority so far diminished, and their spirit so much broken, that he need no longer confine his operations to the dikes, but meet his enemy on the firm plain which extended beyond the Alpon. He passed the brook by means of a temporary bridge which had been prepared during night; and the battle raged as fiercely on the dry level, as it had done on the dikes and amongst the marshes.

The Austrians fought with resolution, the rather that their left, though stationed on dry ground, was secured by a marsh which Buonaparte had no means of turning. But though this was the case, Napoleon contrived to gain his point by impressing on the enemy an idea that he had actually accomplished that which he had no means of doing. This he effected by sending a daring officer, with about thirty of the guides, (his own body-guards they may be called,) with four trumpets; and directing these determined cavaliers to charge, and the trumpets to sound, as if a large body of horse had crossed the marsh. Augereau attacked the Austrian left at the same moment; and a fresh body of troops advancing from Legnago, compelled them to retreat, but not to fly.

Alvinzi was now compelled to give way, and commence his retreat on Montebello. He disposed seven thousand men in echellons to cover this movement, which was accomplished without very much loss; but his ranks had been much thinned by the slaughter of the three battles of Arcola. Eight thousand men has been stated as the amount of his losses. The French, who made so many and so sanguinary assaults upon the villages, must also have suffered a great deal. Buonaparte acknowledges this in energetic terms. "Never," he writes to Carnot, "was field of battle so disputed. I have almost no generals —"

maintaining—I can assure you that the victory could not have been gained at a cheaper expense. The enemy were numerous, and desperately resolute.” The truth is, that Buonaparte’s mode of striking terror by these bloody and desperate charges in front upon strong positions, was a blemish in his system. They cost many men, and were not uniformly successful. That of Arcola was found a vain waste of blood, till science was employed instead of main force, when the position was turned by Guieux on the first day; on the third, by the troops who crossed the Alpon.

The tardy conduct of Davidowich, during these three undecided days of slaughterous struggle, is worthy of notice and censure. It would appear that from the 10th November that general had it in his power to attack the division which he had hitherto driven before him, and that he had delayed doing so till the 16th; and on the 18th, just the day after Alvinzi had made his retreat, he approached Verona on the right bank. Had these movements taken place before Alvinzi’s defeat, or even during any of the three days preceding, when the French were engaged before Arcola, the consequences must have been very serious. Finding, however, that Alvinzi had retreated, Davidowich followed the same course, and withdrew into the mountains, not much annoyed by the French, who respected the character of his army, which had been repeatedly victorious, and felt the weakness incident to their own late losses.

Another incidental circumstance tends equally strongly to mark the want of concert and communication among the Austrian generals. Wurmser, who had remained quiet in Mantua during all the time when Alvinzi and Davidowich were in the neighbourhood, made a vigorous sally on the 23d November; when his doing so was of little consequence, since he could not be supported.

Thus ended the fourth campaign undertaken for the Austrian possessions in Italy. The consequences were not so decidedly in Buonaparte’s favour as those of the three former. Mantua, it is true, had received no relief; and so far the principal object of the Austrians had miscarried. But Wurmser was of a temper to continue the defence till the last moment, and had already provided for a longer defence than the French counted upon, by curtailing the rations of the garrison. The armies of Friuli and the Tyrol had also, since the last campaign, retained possession of Bassano and Trent, and removed the French from the mountains through which access is gained to the Austrian hereditary dominions. Neither had Alvinzi suffered any such heavy defeat as his predecessors Beaulieu or Wurmser; while Davidowich, on the contrary, was uniformly successful, had he known how to avail himself of his victories. Still the Austrians were not likely, till reinforced again, to interrupt Buonaparte’s quiet possession of Lombardy.

During two months following the battle of Arcola and the retreat of the Austrians, the war which had been so vigorously maintained in Italy experienced a short suspension, and the attention of Buonaparte was turned towards civil matters—the arrangement of the French interests with the various powers of Italy, and with the congress of Lombardy, as well as the erection of the districts of Bologna, Ferrara, Reggio, and Modena, into what was called the Transpadane Republic. These we shall notice elsewhere, as it is not advisable to interrupt the course of our military annals, until we have recounted the last struggle of the Austrians for the relief of Mantua.

It must be in the first place observed, that, whether from jealousy or from want of means, supplies and recruits were very slowly transmitted from France to their Italian army. About seven thousand men, who were actually sent to join Buonaparte, scarcely repaired the losses which he had sustained in the late bloody campaigns. At the same time the treaty with the Pope being broken off, the supreme Pontiff threatened to march a considerable army towards Lombardy. Buonaparte endeavoured to supply the want of reinforcements by raising a defensive legion among the Lombards, to which he united many Poles.

This body was not fit to be brought into line against the Austrians, but was more than sufficient to hold at bay the troops of the Papal See, who have never enjoyed of late years a high degree of military reputation.

Meantime Austria, who seemed to cling to Italy with the tenacity of a dying grasp, again, and now for the fifth time, recruited her armies on the frontier, and placing Alvinzi once more at the head of sixty thousand men, commanded him to resume the offensive against the French in Italy. The spirit of the country had been roused instead of discouraged by the late defeats. The volunteer corps, consisting of persons of respectability and consideration, took the field, for the redemption, if their blood could purchase it, of the national honour. Vienna furnished four battalions, which were presented by the Empress with a banner, that she had wrought for them with her own hands. The Tyrolese also thronged once more to their sovereign's standard, undismayed by a proclamation made by Buonaparte after the retreat from Arcola, and which paid homage, though a painful one, to these brave marksmen. "Whatever Tyrolese," said this atrocious document, "is taken with arms in his hand, shall be put to instant death." Alvinzi sent abroad a counter proclamation, "that for every Tyrolese put to death as threatened, he would hang up a French officer." Buonaparte again replied, "that if the Austrian general should use the retaliation he threatened, he would execute in his turn officer for officer out of his prisoners, commencing with Alvinzi's own nephew, who was in his power." A little calmness on either side brought them to reflect on the cruelty of aggravating the laws of war, which are already too severe; so that the system of military execution was renounced on both sides.

But notwithstanding this display of zeal and loyalty on the part of the Austrian nation, its councils do not appear to have derived wisdom from experience. The losses sustained by Wurmser and by Alvinzi, proceeded in a great measure from the radical error of having divided their forces, and commenced the campaign on a double line of operation, which could not, or at least were not made to, correspond and communicate with each other. Yet they commenced this campaign on the same unhappy principles. One army descending from the Tyrol upon Montebaldo, the other was to march down by the Brenta on the Paduan territory, and then to operate on the lower Adige, the line of which, of course, they were expected to force, for the purpose of relieving Mantua. The Aulic Council ordered that these two armies were to direct their course so as to meet, if possible, upon the beleaguered fortress. Should they succeed in raising the siege, there was little doubt that the French must be driven out of Italy; but even were the scheme only partially successful, still it might allow Wurmser with his cavalry to escape from that besieged city, and retreat into the Romagna, where it was designed that he should, with the assistance of his staff and officers, organize and assume the command of the Papal army. In the meantime, an intelligent agent was sent to communicate if possible with Wurmser.

This man fell into the hands of the besiegers. It was in vain that he swallowed his despatches, which were inclosed in a ball of wax; means were found to make the stomach render up its trust, and the document which the wax enclosed was found to be a letter, signed by the Emperor's own hand, directing Wurmser to enter into no capitulation, but to hold out as long as possible in expectation of relief, and if compelled to leave Mantua, to accept of no conditions, but to cut his way into the Romagna, and take upon himself the command of the Papal army. Thus Buonaparte became acquainted with the storm which was approaching, and which was not long of breaking.

Alvinzi, who commanded the principal army, advanced from Bassano to Roveredo upon the Adige. Provera, distinguished for his gallant defence of Cossaria during the action of Millesimo,* commanded the divisions which were

* See page 308.

to act upon the lower Adige. He marched as far as Bevi l'Acqua, while his advanced guard, under Prince Hohenzollern, compelled a body of French to cross to the right bank of the Adige.

Buonaparte, uncertain which of these attacks he was to consider as the main one, concentrated his army at Verona, which had been so important a place during all these campaigns as a central point, from which he might at pleasure march either up the Adige against Alvinzi, or descend the river to resist the attempts of Provera. He trusted that Joubert, whom he had placed in defence of Corona, a little town which had been strongly fortified for the purpose, might be able to make a good temporary defence. He despatched troops for Joubert's support to Castel Nuovo, but hesitated to direct his principal force in that direction until ten in the evening of 13th January, when he received information that Joubert had been attacked at La Corona by an immense body, which he had resisted with difficulty during the day, and was now about to retreat, in order to secure the important eminence at Rivoli, which was the key of his whole position.

Judging from this account that the principal danger occurred on the upper part of the Adige, Buonaparte left only Augereau's division to dispute with Provera the passage of that river on the lower part of its course. He was especially desirous to secure the elevated and commanding position of Rivoli, before the enemy had time to receive his cavalry and cannon, as he hoped to bring on an engagement ere he was united with those important parts of his army. By forced marches Napoleon arrived at Rivoli at two in the morning of the 14th, and from that elevated situation, by the assistance of a clear moonlight, he was able to discover, that the bivouac of the enemy was divided into five distinct and separate bodies, from which he inferred that their attack the next day would be made in the same number of columns.

The distance at which the bivouacs were stationed from the position of Joubert, made it evident to Napoleon that they did not mean to make their attack before ten in the morning, meaning probably to wait for their infantry and artillery. Joubert was at this time in the act of evacuating the position which he only occupied by a rear-guard. Buonaparte commanded him instantly to counter-march and resume possession of the important eminence of Rivoli.

A few Croats had already advanced so near the French line as to discover that Joubert's light troops had abandoned the chapel of Saint Marc, of which they took possession. It was retaken by the French, and the struggle to recover and maintain it brought on a severe action, first with the regiment to which the detachment of Croats belonged, and afterwards with the whole Austrian column which lay nearest to that point, and which was commanded by Ocskay. The latter was repulsed, but the column of Kobler pressed forward to support them, and having gained the summit, attacked two regiments of the French who were stationed there, each protected by a battery of cannon. Notwithstanding this advantage, one of the regiments gave way, and Buonaparte himself galloped to bring up reinforcements. The nearest French were those of Massena's division, which, tired with the preceding night's march, had lain down to take some rest. They started up, however, at the command of Napoleon, and suddenly arriving on the field, in half an hour the column of Kobler was beaten and driven back. That of Liptay advanced in turn; and Quasdonowich, observing that Joubert, in prosecuting his success over the division of Ocskay, had pushed forward and abandoned the chapel of Saint Marc, detached three battalions to ascend the hill, and occupy that post. While the Austrians scaled, on one side, the hill on which the chapel is situated, three battalions of French infantry, who had been counter-marched by Joubert to prevent Quasdonowich's purpose, struggled up the steep ascent on another point. The activity of the French brought them first to the summit, and having then the advantage of the ground, it was no difficult matter for them to force the

advancing Austrians headlong down the hill which they were endeavouring to climb. Meantime, the French batteries thundered on the broken columns of the enemy—their cavalry made repeated charges, and the whole Austrians who had been engaged fell into inextricable disorder. The columns which had advanced were irretrievably defeated; those who remained were in such a condition, that to attack would have been madness.

Amid this confusion the division of Lusignan, which was the most remote of the Austrian columns, being intrusted with the charge of the artillery and baggage of the army, had, after depositing these according to order, mounted the heights of Rivoli, and assumed a position in rear of the French. Had this column attained the same ground while the engagement continued in front, there can be no doubt that it would have been decisive against Napoleon. Even as it was, their appearance in the rear would have startled troops, however brave, who had less confidence in their general; but those of Buonaparte only exclaimed, "There arrive farther supplies to our market," in full reliance that their commander could not be out-manceuvred. The Austrian division, on the other hand, arriving after the battle was lost, being without artillery or cavalry, and having been obliged to leave a proportion of their numbers to keep a check upon a French brigade, felt that, instead of being in a position to cut off the French, by attacking their rear while their front was engaged, they themselves were cut off by the intervention of the victorious French betwixt them and their defeated army. Lusignan's division was placed under a heavy fire of the artillery in reserve, and was soon obliged to lay down its arms. So critical are the events of war, that a military movement, which, executed at one particular period of time would have insured victory, is not unlikely, from the loss of a brief interval, to occasion only more general calamity.* The Austrians, on this, as on some other occasions, verified too much Napoleon's allegation, that they did not sufficiently consider the value of time in military affairs.

The field of Rivoli was one of the most desperate that Buonaparte ever won, and was gained entirely by superior military skill, and not by the overbearing system of mere force of numbers, to which he has been accused of being partial. He himself had his horse repeatedly wounded in the course of the action, and exerted to the utmost his personal influence to bring up the troops into action where their presence was most required.

Alvinzi's error, which was a very gross one, consisted in supposing that no more than Joubert's inconsiderable force was stationed at Rivoli, and in preparing, therefore, to destroy him at his leisure; when his acquaintance with the French celerity of movement ought to have prepared him for the possibility of Buonaparte's night-march, by which, bringing up the chosen strength of his army into the position where the enemy only expected to find a feeble force, he was enabled to resist and defeat a much superior army, brought to the field upon different points, without any just calculation on the means of resistance which were to be opposed; without the necessary assistance of cavalry and artillery; and, above all, without a preconcerted plan of co-operation and mutual support. The excellence of Napoleon's manœuvres was well supported by the devotion of his generals, and the courage of his soldiers. Massena, in particular, so well seconded his general, that afterwards, when Napoleon as Emperor conferred on him the title of duke, he assigned him his designation from the battle of Rivoli.

Almost before this important and decisive victory was absolutely gained, news arrived which required the presence of Buonaparte elsewhere. On the very

* It is represented in some military accounts, that the division which appeared in the rear of the French belonged to the army of Provera, and had been detached by him on crossing the Adige, as mentioned below. But Napoleon's Saint Helena manuscripts prove the contrary. Provera only crossed on the 14th January, and it was on the morning of the same day that Napoleon had seen the five divisions of Alvinzi, that of Lusignan which afterwards appeared in the rear of his army being one, lying around Joubert's position of Rivoli.

same day of the battle, Provera, whom we left manœuvring on the Lower Adige, threw a bridge of pontoons over that river, where the French were not prepared to oppose his passage, and pushed forward to Mantua, the relief of which fortress he had by stratagem nearly achieved. A regiment of his cavalry, wearing white cloaks, and resembling in that particular the first regiment of French hussars, presented themselves before the suburb of Saint George, then only covered by a mere line of circumvallation. The barricades were about to be opened without suspicion, when it occurred to a sagacious old French sergeant, who was beyond the walls gathering wood, that the dress of this regiment of white-cloaks was fresher than that of the French corps, called Bertini's, for whom they were mistaken. He communicated his suspicions to a drummer who was near him; they gained the suburb, and cried to arms, and the guns of the defences were opened on the hostile cavalry whom they were about to have admitted in the guise of friends.

About the time that this incident took place, Buonaparte himself arrived at Roverbella, within twelve miles of Mantua, to which he had marched with incredible despatch from the field of battle at Rivoli, leaving to Massena, Murat, and Joubert, the task of completing his victory, by the close pursuit of Alvinzi and his scattered forces.

In the meanwhile, Provera communicated with the garrison of Mantua across the lake, and concerted the measures for its relief with Wurmser. On the 16th of January, being the morning after the battle of Rivoli, and the unsuccessful attempt to surprise the suburb of Saint George, the garrison of Mantua sallied from the place in strength, and took post at the causeway of La Favorita, being the only one which is defended by an inclosed citadel, or independent fortress. Napoleon, returning at the head of his victorious forces, surrounded and attacked with fury the troops of Provera, while the blockading army compelled the garrison, at the bayonet's point, to re-enter the besieged city of Mantua. Provera, who had in vain, though with much decision and gallantry, attempted the relief of Mantua, which his Imperial master had so much at heart, was compelled to lay down his arms with a division of about five thousand men, whom he had still united under his person. The detached corps which he had left to protect his bridge, and other passes in his rear, sustained a similar fate. Thus, one division of the army, which had commenced the campaign of January only on the 7th of that month, were the prisoners of the destined conqueror before ten days had elapsed. The larger army, commanded by Alvinzi, had no better fortune. They were close pursued from the bloody field of Rivoli, and never were permitted to draw breath or to recover their disorder. Large bodies were intercepted and compelled to surrender, a practice now so frequent among the Austrian troops, that it ceased to be shameful.

Nevertheless, one example is so peculiar as to deserve commemoration, as a striking example of the utter consternation and dispersion of the Austrians after this dreadful defeat, and of the confident and audacious promptitude which the French officers derived from their unvaried success. René, a young officer, was in possession of the village called Garda, on the lake of the same name, and, in visiting his advanced posts, he perceived some Austrians approaching, whom he caused his escort to surround and make prisoners. Advancing to the front to reconnoitre, he found himself close to the head of an imperial column of eighteen hundred men, which a turning in the road had concealed till he was within twenty yards of them. "Down with your arms!" said the Austrian commandant; to which René answered with the most ready boldness, "Do you lay down your arms! I have destroyed your advanced guard, as witness these prisoners—ground your arms, or no quarter." And the French soldiers catching the hint of their leader, joined in the cry of "Ground your arms." The Austrian officer hesitated, and proposed to enter into capitulation; the Frenchman would admit of no terms but instant and immediate surrender. The dis-

pirited imperialist yielded up his sword, and commanded his soldiers to imitate his example. But the Austrian soldiers began to suspect the truth; they became refractory, and refused to obey their leader, whom René addressed with the utmost apparent composure. "You are an officer, sir, and a man of honour—you know the rules of war—you have surrendered—you are therefore my prisoner, but I rely on your parole—Here, I return your sword—compel your men to submission, otherwise I direct against you the division of six thousand men who are under my command." The Austrian was utterly confounded, betwixt the appeal to his honour and the threat of a charge from six thousand men. He assured René he might rely on his punctilious compliance with the parole he had given him; and speaking in German to his soldiers, persuaded them to lay down their arms, a submission which he had soon afterward the satisfaction to see had been made to one twelfth part of their number.

Amid such extraordinary success, the ground which the French had lost in Italy was speedily resumed. Trent and Bassano were again occupied by the French. They regained all the positions and strongholds which they had possessed on the frontiers of Italy before Alvinzi's first descent, and might perhaps have penetrated deeper into the mountainous frontier of Germany, but for the snow which choked up the passes.

One crowning consequence of the victories of Rivoli and of La Favorita, was the surrender of Mantua itself, that prize which had cost so much blood, and had been defended with such obstinacy.

For several days after the decisive actions which left him without a shadow of hope of relief, Wurmser continued the defence of the place in a sullen yet honourable despair, natural to the feelings of a gallant veteran, who, to the last, hesitated between the desire to resist, and the sense that, his means of subsistence being almost totally expended, resistance was absolutely hopeless. At length he sent his aid-de-camp, Klenau (afterwards a name of celebrity), to the head-quarters of Serrurier, who commanded the blockade, to treat of a surrender. Klenau used the customary language on such occasions. He expatiated on the means which he said Mantua still possessed of holding out, but said, that as Wurmser doubted whether the place could be relieved in time, he would regulate his conduct as to immediate submission, or farther defence, according to the conditions of surrender to which the French generals were willing to admit him.

A French officer of distinction was present, muffled in his cloak, and remaining apart from the two officers, but within hearing of what had passed. When their discussion was finished, this unknown person stepped forward, and taking a pen, wrote down the conditions of surrender to which Wurmser was to be admitted—conditions more honourable and favourable by far than what his extremity could have exacted. "These," said the unknown officer to Klenau, "are the terms which Wurmser may accept at present, and which will be equally tendered to him at any period when he finds farther resistance impossible. We are aware that he is too much a man of honour to give up the fortress and city, so long and honourably defended, while the means of resistance remain in his power. If he delays accepting the conditions for a week, for a month, for two months, they shall be equally his when he chooses to accept them. Tomorrow I pass the Po, and march upon Rome." Klenau, perceiving that he spoke to the French commander-in-chief, frankly admitted that the garrison could not longer delay surrender, having scarce three days' provisions unconsumed.

This trait of generosity towards a gallant but unfortunate enemy, was highly honourable to Buonaparte. The taste which dictated the stage-effect of the cloak may indeed be questioned; but the real current of his feeling towards the venerable object of his respect, and at the same time compassion, is ascertained otherwise. He wrote to the Directory on the subject, that he had afforded to

Wurmser such conditions of surrender as became the generosity of the French nation towards an enemy, who, having lost his army by misfortune, was so little desirous to secure his personal safety, that he threw himself into Mantua, cutting his way through the blockading army; thus voluntarily undertaking the privations of a siege, which his gallantry protracted until almost the last morsel of provisions was exhausted.

But the young victor paid still a more delicate and noble-minded compliment, in declining to be personally present when the veteran Wurmser had the mortification to surrender his sword, with his garrison of twenty thousand men, ten thousand of whom were fit for service. This self-denial did Napoleon as much credit nearly as his victory, and must not be omitted in a narrative, which, often called to stigmatise his ambition and its consequences, should not be the less ready to observe marks of dignified and honourable feeling. The history of this remarkable man more frequently reminds us of the romantic and improbable victories imputed to the heroes of the romantic ages, than of the spirit of chivalry attributed to them; but in this instance Napoleon's conduct towards Wurmser may be justly compared to that of the Black Prince to his royal prisoner, King John of France.

Serrurier, who had conducted the leaguer, had the honour to receive the surrender of Wurmser, after the siege of Mantua had continued for six months, during which the garrison is said by Napoleon to have lost twenty-seven thousand men by disease, and in the various numerous and bloody sallies which took place. This decisive event put an end to the war in Italy. The contest with Austria was hereafter to be waged on the hereditary dominions of that haughty power.

The French, possessed of this grand object of their wishes, were not long in displaying their national characteristics. Their military and prescient sagacity were evinced in employing one of the most celebrated of their engineers, to improve and bring nearly to perfection the defence of a city which may be termed the citadel of Italy. They set afoot, besides, civic feasts and ceremonies, and among others, one in honour of Virgil, who, being the panegyrist of an emperor, was indifferently selected as the presiding genius of an infant republic. Their cupidity was evinced by their artists' exercising their ingenuity in devising means to cut from the wall and carry off the fresco paintings, by Titian, of the wars between the Gods and the Giants, at all risks of destroying what could never be replaced. Luckily the attempt was found totally unadvisable.

CHAPTER XXV.

Situation and Views of Buonaparte at this period of the Campaign.—His politic Conduct towards the Italians—Popularity.—Severe terms of Peace proposed to the Pope—rejected.—Napoleon differs from the Directory, and Negotiations are renewed—but again rejected.—The Pope raises his army to 40,000 Men—Napoleon invades the Papal Territories.—The Papal Troops defeated near Imola—and at Ancona—which is captured—Loreto taken.—Clemency of Buonaparte to the French recusant Clergy.—Peace of Tolentino.—Napoleon's Letter to the Pope.—San Marino.—View of the situation of the different Italian States—Rome—Naples—Tuscany—Venice.

THE eyes of all Europe were now riveted on Napoleon Buonaparte, whose rise had been so sudden that he was become the terror of empires and the founder of states; the conqueror of the best generals and most disciplined troops in Europe, within a few months after he had been a mere soldier of fortune, seeking rather for subsistence than expecting honourable distinction.

Such sudden elevations have occasionally happened amid semi-barbarous nations, where great popular insurrections, desolating and decisive revolutions, are common occurrences, but were hitherto unheard of in civilized Europe. The pre-eminence which he had suddenly obtained had, besides, been subjected to so many trials, as to afford every proof of its permanence. Napoleon stood aloft like a cliff on which successive tempests had expended their rage in vain. The means which raised him were equally competent to make good his greatness. He had infused into the armies which he commanded the firmest reliance on his genius, and the greatest love for his person; so that he could always find agents ready to execute his most difficult commands. He had even inspired them with a portion of his own indefatigable exertion and his commanding intelligence. The maxim which he inculcated upon them when practising those long and severe marches which formed one essential part of his system, was, "I would rather gain victory at the expense of your legs than at the price of your blood." The French, under his training, seemed to become the very men he wanted, and to forget in the excitation of war and the hope of victory, even the feelings of weariness and exhaustion. The following description of the French soldier by Napoleon himself occurs in his despatches to the Directory during his first campaign in Italy:—

"Were I to name all those who have been distinguished by acts of personal bravery, I must send the muster-roll of all the grenadiers and carabiniers of the advanced-guard. They jest with danger and laugh at death; and if anything can equal their intrepidity, it is the gaiety with which, singing alternately songs of love and patriotism, they accomplish the most severe forced marches. When they arrive at their bivouac, it is not to take their repose, as might be expected, but to tell each his story of the battle of the day, and produce his plan for that of to-morrow; and many of them think with great correctness on military subjects. The other day I was inspecting a demi-brigade, and as it filed past me, a common chasseur approached my horse, and said, 'General, you ought to do so and so.'—'Hold your peace, you rogue!' I replied. He disappeared immediately, nor have I since been able to find him out. But the manœuvre which he recommended was the very same which I had privately resolved to carry into execution."

To command this active, intelligent, and intrepid soldiery, Buonaparte possessed officers entirely worthy of the charge; men young, or at least not advanced in years, to whose ambition the Revolution, and the wars which it had brought on, had opened an unlimited career, and whose genius was inspired by the plans of their leader, and the success which attended them. Buonaparte, who had his eye on every man, never neglected to distribute rewards and punishments, praise and censure, with a liberal hand, or omitted to press for what latterly was rarely if ever denied to him—the promotion of such officers as particularly distinguished themselves. He willingly assumed the task of soothing the feelings of those whose relations had fallen under his banners. His letter of consolation to General Clarke upon the death of young Clarke his nephew, who fell at Arcola, is affecting, as showing that amid all his victories he felt himself the object of reproach and criticism.* His keen sensitiveness to the at-

* Letter from Napoleon to General Clarke, 25 Brumaire, 5th year of the Republic.—"Your nephew has been slain on the field of battle at Arcola. The young man had been familiar with arms—had led on columns, and would have been one day an excellent officer. He has died with glory in the face of the enemy. He did not suffer for an instant. What man would not envy such a death?—Who is he that would not accept as a favourable condition the choice of thus escaping from the vicissitudes of a contemptible world?—Who is there among us who has not a hundred times regretted that he has not been thus withdrawn from the powerful effects of calumny, of envy, and of all the odious passions which seem the almost exclusive directors of the conduct of mankind?"—This letter, remarkable in many respects, will remind the English reader of Cato's exclamation over the body of his son—

"Who would not be this youth?"

tacks of the public press attended him through life, and, like the slave in the triumphal car, seemed to remind him that he was still a mortal man.

It should farther be remarked, that Napoleon withstood, instantly and boldly, all the numerous attempts made by commissaries, and that description of persons, to encroach upon the fund destined for the use of the army. Much of his public, and more of his private correspondence, is filled with complaints against these agents, although he must have known that, in attacking them, he disobliterated men of highest influence, who had frequently some secret interest in their wealth. But his military fame made his services indispensable, and permitted him to set at defiance the enmity of such persons, who are generally as timid as they are sordid. Buonaparte's former patron, Barras, was supposed to be accessible to this species of corruption.

Towards the general officers there took place a gradual change of deportment, as the commander-in-chief began to feel gradually, more and more, the increasing sense of his own personal importance. We have been informed by an officer of the highest rank, that, during the earlier campaigns, Napoleon used to rejoice with, and embrace them as associates, nearly on the same footing, engaged in the same tasks. After a period, his language and carriage became those of a frank soldier, who, sensible of the merit of his subordinate assistants, yet makes them sensible, by his manner, that he is their commander-in-chief. When his infant fortunes began to come of age, his deportment to his generals was tinctured with that lofty courtesy which princes use towards their subjects, and which plainly intimated, that he held them as subjects in the war, not as brethren.*

Napoleon's conduct towards the Italians individually was, in most instances, in the highest degree prudent and political, while, at the same time, it coincided, as true policy usually does, with the rules of justice and moderation, and served in a great measure to counterbalance the odium which he incurred by despoiling Italy of the works of art, and even by his infringements on the religious system of the Catholics.

On the latter subject, the general became particularly cautious, and his dislike or contempt of the Church of Rome was no longer shown in that gross species of satire which he had at first given loose to. On the contrary, it was veiled under philosophical indifference; and, while relieving the clergy of their worldly possessions, Napoleon took care to avoid the error of the Jacobins; never proposing their tenets as an object of persecution, but protecting their persons, and declaring himself a decided friend to general toleration on all points of conscience.

In point of politics, as well as religion, the opinions of Buonaparte appeared to have experienced a great change. It may be doubted, indeed, if he ever in his heart adopted those of the outrageous Jacobins; but he must doubtless have professed them, whether sincerely or not, when he first obtained promotion under the influence of the younger Robespierre, Salicetti, and Barras, who, afterwards a Thermidorien, was a Sans Culotte during the siege of Toulon.†

* Count Las Casas mentions an incident of the same kind. An officer, who had known Buonaparte familiarly before Toulon, was, when he obtained the command of the Army of Italy, about to rush into the arms of his old comrade. But the look and manner of the general made it evident there was an end to their intimacy, and that the intercourse between them had changed its character with his friend's promotion.

† Even when before Toulon, he was not held by clear-sighted persons to be a very orthodox Jacobin. General Cartaux, the stupid Sans Culotte under whom he first served, was talking of the young commandant of artillery with applause, when his wife, who was somewhat first in command at home, advised him not to reckon too much on that young man, "who had too much sense to be long a Sans Culotte."—"Sense? Female-citizen Cartaux," said her offended husband, "do you take us for fools?"—"By no means," answered the lady; "but his sense is not of the same kind with yours."—LAS CASAS' *Journal*, vol. I. p. 144. *Colburn's Translation*.—In the same work, we read an admission of Napoleon, that his brother Lucien was a much more violent Jacobin than himself, and that some papers published as his, with the signature, Brutus Buonaparte, ought in fact to be ascribed to Lucien.

Buonaparte's clear and sound good sense speedily made him sensible, that such a violence on the established rules of reason and morality, as an attempt to make the brutal force of the multitude the forcible controller of those possessed of the wisdom, property, and education of a country, is too unnatural to remain long, or to become the basis of a well-regulated state. Being at present a Republican of the Thermidorien party, Buonaparte, even though he made use of the established phrases Liberty and Equality, acknowledged no dignity superior than Citizen, and *Thee'd* and *Thou'd* whomsoever he addressed, was permitted to mix many grains of liberality with those democratic forms. Indeed, the republican creed of the day began to resemble the leathern apron of the brazier who founded a dynasty in the East—his descendants continued to display it as their banner, but enriched it so much with gems and embroidery, that there was little of the original stuff to be discovered.

Jacobinism, for example, being founded on the principle of assimilating the national character to the gross ignorance of the lower classes, was the natural enemy of the fine arts and of literature, whose productions the Sans Culottes could not comprehend, and which they destroyed for the same enlightened reasons that Jack Cade's followers hanged the clerk of Chatham, with his pen and inkhorn about his neck. Buonaparte, on the contrary, saw that knowledge, of whatsoever kind, was power; and therefore he distinguished himself honourably amidst his victories, by seeking the conversation of men distinguished for literary attainments, and displaying an interest in the antiquities and curiosities of the towns which he visited, that could not but seem flattering to the inhabitants. In a letter addressed publicly to Oriani, a celebrated astronomer, he assures him that all men of genius, all who had distinguished themselves in the republic of letters, were to be accounted natives of France, whatever might be the actual place of their birth. "Hitherto," he said, "the learned in Italy did not enjoy the consideration to which they were entitled—they lived retired in their laboratories and libraries, too happy if they could escape the notice, and consequently the persecution, of kings and priests. It is now no longer thus—there is no longer religious inquisition, nor despotic power. Thought is free in Italy. I invite the literary and scientific persons to consult together, and propose to me their ideas on the subject of giving new vigour and life to the fine arts and sciences. All who desire to visit France will be received with distinction by the government. The people of France have more pride in enrolling among their citizens a skilful mathematician, a painter of reputation, a distinguished man in any class of literature, than in adding to their territories a large and wealthy city. I request, sir, that you will make my sentiments known to the most distinguished literary persons in the state of Milan." To the municipality of Pavia he wrote, desiring that the professors of their celebrated university should resume their course of instruction under the security of his protection, and inviting them to point out to him such measures as might occur, for giving a more brilliant existence to their ancient seminaries.

The interest which he thus took in the literature and literary institutions of Italy, was shown by admitting men of science or letters freely to his person. Their communication was the more flattering, that being himself of Italian descent, and familiar with the beautiful language of the country from his infancy, his conversation with men of literary eminence was easily conducted. It may be mentioned episodically, that Napoleon found a remnant of his family in Italy, in the person of the Abbé Gregorio Buonaparte, the only remaining branch of that Florentine family, of whom the Corsican line were cadets. He resided at San Miniato, of which he was canon, and was an old man, and said to be wealthy. The relationship was eagerly acknowledged, and the general, with his whole staff, dined with the Canon Gregorio. The whole mind of the old priest was wrapt up in a project of obtaining the honours of regular canonization for one of the family called Bonaventura, who had been a capuchin in the

17th century, and was said to have died in the odour of sanctity, though his right to divine honours had never been acknowledged. It must have been ludicrous enough to have heard the old man insist upon a topic so uninteresting to Napoleon, and press the French republican general to use his interest with the Pope. There can be little doubt that the Holy Father, to have escaped other demands, would have canonized a whole French regiment of Carmagnols, and ranked them with the old militia of the calendar, the Theban Legion. But Napoleon was sensible that any request on such a subject coming from him would be only ludicrous.*

The progress which Buonaparte made personally in the favour of the Italians, was, doubtless, a great assistance to the propagation of the new doctrines which were connected with the French Revolution, and was much aided by the trust which he seemed desirous to repose in the natives of the country. He retained, no doubt, in his own hands, the ultimate decision of everything of consequence; but in matters of ordinary importance, he permitted and encouraged the Italians to act for themselves, in a manner they had not been accustomed to under their German masters. The internal government of their towns was entrusted to provisional governors, chosen without respect to rank, and the maintenance of police was committed to the armed burghers, or national guards. Conscious of the importance annexed to these privileges, they already became impatient for national liberty. Napoleon could hardly rein back the intense ardour of the large party among the Lombards who desired an immediate declaration of independence, and he had no other expedient left than to amuse them with procrastinating excuses, which enhanced their desire of such an event, while they delayed its gratification. Other towns of Italy,—for it was among the citizens of the towns that these sentiments were chiefly cultivated,—began to evince the same wish to new-model their governments on the revolutionary system; and this ardour was chiefly shown on the southern side of the Po.

It must be remembered, that Napoleon had engaged in treaty with the Duke of Modena, and had agreed to guarantee his principality, on payment of immense contributions in money and stores, besides the surrender of the most valuable treasures of his museum. In consequence, the Duke of Modena was permitted to govern his states by a regency, he himself fixing his residence in Venice. But his two principal towns, Reggio and Modena, especially the former, became desirous of shaking off his government. Anticipating in doing so the approbation of the French general and government, the citizens of Reggio rose in insurrection, expelled from their town a body of the ducal troops, and planted the tree of liberty, resolved, as they said, to constitute themselves a free state, under the protection of the French Republic. The Ducal regency, with a view of protecting Modena from a similar attempt, mounted cannon on their ramparts, and took other defensive measures.

Buonaparte affected to consider these preparations as designed against the French; and marching a body of troops, took possession of the city without resistance, deprived the Duke of all the advantages which he had purchased by the mediation of the celebrated Saint Jerome, and declared the town under protection of France. Bologna and Ferrara, legations belonging to the Papal See, had been already occupied by French troops, and placed under the management of a committee of their citizens. They were now encouraged to coalesce with Reggio and Modena. A congress of an hundred delegates from the four districts was summoned, to effect the formation of a government which

* Las Casas says, that afterwards the Pope himself touched on the same topic, and was disposed to see the immediate guidance and protection afforded by the consanguinean Saint Bonaventura in the great deeds wrought by his relation. It was said of the church-endowing saint, David King of Scotland, that he was a sore saint for the Crown; certainly Saint Bonaventura must have been a sore saint for the Papal See. The old abbé left Napoleon his fortune, which he conferred on some public institution.

should extend over them all. The Congress met accordingly, engaged their constituents in a perpetual union, under title of the Transpadane Republic from their situation on the right of the river Po; thus assuming the character of independence, while in fact they remained under the authority of Buonaparte, like clay in the hands of the potter, who may ultimately model it into any shape he has a mind. In the meantime, he was careful to remind them, that the liberty which it was desirable to establish, ought to be consistent with due subjection to the laws. "Never forget," he said, in reply to their address announcing their new form of government, "that laws are mere nullities without the force necessary to support them. Attend to your military organization, which you have the means of placing on a respectable footing—you will be more fortunate than the people of France, for you will arrive at liberty without passing through the ordeal of revolution."

This was not the language of a Jacobin; and it fortifies the belief, that even now, while adhering ostensibly to the Republican system, Buonaparte anticipated considerable changes in that of France.

Meanwhile the Lombards became impatient at seeing their neighbours outstrip them in the path of revolution, and of nominal independence. The municipality of Milan proceeded to destroy all titles of honour, as a badge of feudal dependence, and became so impatient, that Buonaparte was obliged to pacify them by a solemn assurance that they should speedily enjoy the benefits of a republican constitution; and to tranquillize their irritation, placed them under the government of a provisional council, selected from all classes, labourers included.

This measure made it manifest, that the motives which had induced the delay of the French government to recognize the independence (as they termed it) of Lombardy, were now of less force; and in a short time, the provisional council of Milan, after some modest doubts on their own powers, revolutionized their country, and assumed the title of the Transpadane Republic, which they afterwards laid aside, when, on their union with the Cispadane, both were united under the name of the Cisalpine Commonwealth. This decisive step was adopted 3d January 1797. Decrees of a popular character had preceded the declaration of independence, but an air of moderation was observed in the revolution itself. The nobles, deprived of their feudal rights and titular dignities, were subjected to no incapacities; the reformation of the church was touched upon gently, and without indicating any design of its destruction. In these particulars, the Italian commonwealths stopped short of their Gallic prototype.

If Buonaparte may be justly charged with want of faith, in destroying the authority of the Duke of Modena, after having accepted of a price for granting him peace and protection, we cannot object to him the same charge for acceding to the Transpadane Republic, in so far as it detached the legations of Ferrara and Bologna from the Roman See. These had been in a great measure reserved for the disposal of the French, as circumstances should dictate, when a final treaty should take place betwixt the Republic and the Sovereign Pontiff. But many circumstances had retarded this pacification, and seemed at length likely to break it off without hope of renewal.

If Buonaparte is correct in his statement, which we see no reason to doubt, the delay of a pacification with the Roman See was chiefly the fault of the Directory, whose avaricious and engrossing spirit was at this period its most distinguishing characteristic. An armistice, purchased by treasure, by contributions, by pictures and statues, and by the cession of the two legations of Bologna and Ferrara, having been mediated for his Holiness by the Spanish ambassador Azara, the Pope sent two plenipotentiaries to Paris to treat of a definitive peace. But the conditions proposed were so severe, that however desperate his condition, the Pope found them totally inadmissible. His Holiness

was required to pay a large contribution in grain for ten years, a regular tribute of six millions of Roman crowns for six years, to cede to France in perpetuity the ports of Ancona and Civita Vecchia, and to declare the independence of Ferrara, Bologna, and Ravenna. To add insult to oppression, the total cession of the Clementine Museum was required, and it was stipulated that France should have under management of her minister at Rome, a separate tribunal for judging her subjects, and a separate theatre for their amusement. Lastly, the secular sovereignty of the dominions of the church was to be executed by a senate and a popular body.

These demands might have been complied with, although they went the length of entirely stripping his Holiness of the character of a secular prince. But there were others made on him, in capacity of head of the church, which he could not grant, if he meant in future to lay claim to any authority under that once venerable title. The Sovereign Pontiff was required to recall all the briefs which he had issued against France since 1789, to sanction the constitutional oath which released the French clergy from the dominion of the Holy See, and to ratify the confiscation of the church-lands. Treasures might be expended, secular dignities resigned, and provinces ceded; but it was clear that the Sovereign Pontiff could not do what was expressly contrary to the doctrines of the church which he represented. There were but few clergymen in France who had hesitated to prove their devotion to the church of Rome, by submitting to expulsion, rather than take the constitutional oath. It was now for the Head of the Church to show in his own person a similar disinterested devotion to her interests.

Accordingly, the College of Cardinals having rejected the proposals of France, as containing articles contrary to conscience, the Pope declared his determination to abide by the utmost extremity, rather than accede to conditions destructive, degrading, and, in his opinion, impious. The Directory instantly determined on the total ruin of the Pope, and of his power, both spiritual and temporal.

Napoleon dissented from the opinion of the government. In point of moral effect, a reconciliation with the Pope would have been of great advantage to France, and have tended to reunite her with other Catholic nations, and diminish the horror with which she was regarded as sacrilegious and atheistical. Even the army of the Holy See was not altogether to be despised, in case of any reverse taking place in the war with the Austrians. Under these considerations, he prevailed on the Directory to renew the negotiations at Florence. But the French commissioners, having presented as preliminaries sixty indispensable conditions, containing the same articles which had been already rejected, as contrary to the conscience of the Pontiff, the conferences broke up; and the Pope, in despair, resolved to make common cause with the House of Austria, and have recourse to the secular force, which the Roman See had disused for so many years.

It was a case of dire necessity; but the arming of the Pope's government, whose military force had been long the subject of ridicule,* against the victorious conqueror of five Austrian armies, reminds us of Priam, when, in extremity of years and despair, he buckled on his rusty armour, to oppose age and decrepitude to the youthful strength of Pyrrhus.† Yet the measures of Sextus indicated considerable energy. He brought back to Rome an instalment of sixteen millions of stipulated tribute, which was on the road to Buonaparte's military chest—took every measure to increase his army, and by the voluntary exertions

* Voltaire, in some of his romances, terms the Pope an old gentleman having a guard of one hundred men, who mount guard with umbrellas, and who make war on nobody.

† Arma diu senior desueta, trementibus ævo

Circumdat nequicquam humeris, et inutile ferrum

Cingitur —————

Æneid, Lib. II.

of the noble families of Rome, he actually raised it to forty thousand men, and placed at its head the same general Colli, who had commanded with credit the troops of Sardinia during the campaign on the Alps. The utmost pains were taken by the clergy, both regular and secular, to give the expected war the character of a crusade, and to excite the fierce spirit of those peasantry who inhabit the Appenines, and were doubly disposed to be hostile to the French, as foreigners and as heretics. The Pope endeavoured also to form a close alliance with the King of the two Sicilies, who promised in secret to cover Rome with an army of thirty thousand men. Little reliance was indeed to be placed in the good faith of the court of Naples; but the Pope was compared, by the French envoy, to a man who, in the act of falling, would grasp for support at a hook of red-hot iron.

While the Court of Rome showed this hostile disposition, Napoleon reproached the French government for having broke off the negotiation, which they ought to have protracted till the event of Alvinzi's march into Italy was known; at all events, until their general had obtained possession of the sixteen millions, so much wanted to pay his forces. In reply to his remonstrances, he received permission to renew the negotiations upon modified terms. But the Pope had gone too far to recede. Even the French victory of Arcola, and the instant threats of Buonaparte to march against him at the head of a flying column, were unable to move his resolution. "Let the French general march upon Rome," said the Papal minister; "the Pope, if necessary, will quit his capital. The farther the French are drawn from the Adige, the nearer they are to their ultimate destruction." Napoleon was sensible, on receiving a hostile answer, that the Pope still relied on the last preparations which were made for the relief of Mantua, and it was not safe to attempt his chastisement until Alvinzi and Provera should be disposed of. But the decisive battles of Rivoli and La Favorita having ruined these armies, Napoleon was at leisure to execute his purpose of crushing the power, such as it was, of the Holy See. For this purpose he despatched Victor with a French division of four thousand men, and an Italian army of nearly the same force, supplied by Lombardy and by the Transpadane republic, to invade the territories of the Church on the eastern side of Italy, by the route of Imola.

Meantime, the utmost exertions had been made by the clergy of Romagna, to raise the peasants in a mass, and a great many obeyed the sound of the tocsin. But an insurrectionary force is more calculated to embarrass the movements of a regular army, by alarms on their flanks and rear, by cutting off their communications, and destroying their supplies, defending passes, and skirmishing in advantageous positions, than by opposing them in the open field. The Papal army, consisting of about seven or eight thousand men, were encamped on the river Senio, which runs on the southward of the town of Imola, to dispute the passage. The banks were defended with cannon; but the river being unusually low, the French crossed about a league and a half higher up than the position of the Roman army, which, taken in the rear, fled in every direction, after a short resistance. A few hundreds were killed, among whom were several monks, who, holding the crucifix in their hand, had placed themselves in the ranks to encourage the soldiers. Faenza held out, and was taken by storm; but the soldiers were withheld from pillage by the generosity, or prudence of Napoleon, and he dismissed the prisoners of war to carry into the interior of the country the news of their own defeat, of the irresistible superiority of the French army, and of the clemency of their general.

Next day, three thousand of the Papal troops, occupying an advantageous position in front of Ancona, and commanded by Colli, were made prisoners without firing a shot; and Ancona was taken after slight resistance, though a place of some strength. A curious piece of priestcraft had been played off in this town, to encourage the people to resistance. A miraculous image was seen

to shed tears, and the French artists could not discover the mode in which the trick was managed until the image was brought to head quarters, when a glass shrine, by which the illusion was managed, was removed. The Madonna was sent back to the church which owned her, but apparently had become reconciled to the foreign visitors, and dried her tears in consequence of her interview with Buonaparte.

On the 10th of February, the French, moving with great celerity, entered Loretto, where the celebrated Santa Casa is the subject of the Catholic's devotional triumph, or secret scorn, according as his faith or his doubts predominate. The wealth which this celebrated shrine is once supposed to have possessed by gifts of the faithful, had been removed by Colli—if, indeed, it had not been transported to Rome long before the period of which we treat; yet, precious metal and gems to the amount of a million of livres, fell into the possession of the French, whose capture was also enriched by the holy image of Our Lady of Loretto, with the sacred porringer, and a bedgown of dark-coloured camlet, warranted to have belonged to the Blessed Virgin. The image, said to have been of celestial workmanship, was sent to Paris, but was restored to the Pope in 1802. We are not informed that any of the treasures were given back along with the Madonna, to whom they had been devoted.

As the French army advanced upon the Roman territory, there was a menace of the interference of the King of Naples, worthy to be mentioned, both as expressing the character of that court, and showing Napoleon's readiness in anticipating and defeating the arts of indirect diplomacy.

The Prince of Belmonte-Pignatelli, who attended Buonaparte's head-quarters, in the capacity perhaps of an observer, as much as of ambassador for Naples, came to the French general in secrecy, to show him, under strict confidence, a letter of the Queen of the Two Sicilies, proposing to march an army of thirty thousand men towards Rome. "Your confidence shall be repaid," said Buonaparte, who at once saw through the spirit of the communication—"You shall know what I have long since settled to do in case of such an event taking place." He called for the port-folio containing the papers respecting Naples, and presented to the disconcerted Prince the copy of a despatch written in November preceding, which contained this passage:—"The approach of Alvinzi would not prevent my sending six thousand men to chastise the court of Rome; but as the Neapolitan army might march to their assistance, I will postpone this movement till after the surrender of Mantua; in which case, if the King of Naples should interfere, I shall be able to spare twenty-five thousand men to march against his capital, and drive him over to Sicily." Prince Pignatelli was quite satisfied with the result of this mutual confidence, and there was no more said of Neapolitan armed interference.

From Ancona the division commanded by Victor turned westward to Foligno, to unite itself with another column of French which penetrated into the territories of the church by Perugia, which they easily accomplished. Resistance seemed now unavailing. The Pope in vain solicited his subjects to rise against the second Alaric, who was approaching the Holy City. They remained deaf to his exhortations, though made in the names of the Blessed Virgin, and of the Apostles Peter and Paul, who had of old been the visible protectors of the metropolis of the Christian world in a similar emergency. All was dismay and confusion in the patrimony of Saint Peter's, which was now the sole territory remaining in possession of his representative.

But there was an unhappy class of persons, who had found shelter in Rome, rather than disown whose allegiance they had left their homes, and resigned their means of living. These were the recusant French clergy, who had refused to take the constitutional oath, and who now, recollecting the scenes which they witnessed in France, expected little else, than that, on the approach of the Republican troops, they would, like the Israelitish captain, be slain between the

horns of the very altar at which they had taken refuge. It is said that one of their number, frantic at thoughts of the fate which he supposed awaited them, presented himself to Buonaparte, announced his name and condition, and prayed to be led to instant death. Napoleon took the opportunity to show once more that he was acting on principles different from the brutal and persecuting spirit of Jacobinism. He issued a proclamation, in which, premising that the recusant priests, though banished from the French territory, were not prohibited from residing in countries which might be conquered by the French arms, he declares himself satisfied with their conduct. The proclamation goes on to prohibit, under the most severe penalty, the French soldiery, and all other persons, from doing any injury to these unfortunate exiles. The convents are directed to afford them lodging, nourishment, and fifteen French livres (twelve shillings and sixpence British) monthly to each individual, for which the priest was to compensate by saying masses *ad valorem*;—thus assigning the Italian convents payment for their hospitality, in the same coin with which they themselves requited the laity.

Perhaps this liberality might have some weight with the Pope in inducing him to throw himself upon the mercy of France, as had been recommended to him by Buonaparte in a confidential communication through the superior of the monastic order of Camalduli, and more openly in a letter addressed to Cardinal Mattei. The King of Naples made no movement to his assistance. In fine, after hesitating what course to take, and having had at one time his equipage ready harnessed to leave Rome and fly to Naples, the Pontiff judged resistance and flight alike unavailing, and chose the humiliating alternative of entire submission to the will of the conqueror.

It was the object of the Directory entirely to destroy the secular authority of the Pope, and to deprive him of all his temporalities. But Buonaparte foresaw, that whether the Roman territories were united with the new Transpadane Republic, or formed into a separate state, it would alike bring on prematurely a renewal of the war with Naples, ere the north of Italy was yet sufficiently secure to admit the marching a French force into the southern extremities of the Italian peninsula, exposed to descents of the English, and insurrections in the rear. These Napoleon foresaw would be the more dangerous and difficult to subdue, that though he might strip the Pope of his temporalities, he could not deprive him of the supremacy assigned him in spiritual matters by each Catholic; which, on the contrary, was, according to the progress of human feeling, likely to be the more widely felt and recognized in favour of a wanderer and a sufferer for what would be accounted conscience-sake, than of one who, submitting to circumstances, retained as much of the goods of this world as the clemency of his conqueror would permit.

Influenced by these considerations, Buonaparte admitted the Pope to a treaty which terminated in the peace of Tolentino, by which Sextus purchased such a political existence as was left to him, at the highest rate which he had the least chance of discharging. Napoleon mentions, as a curious instance of the crafty and unscrupulous character of the Neapolitans, that the same Pignatelli, whom we have already commemorated, attached himself closely to the plenipotentiaries during the whole treaty of Tolentino; and in his ardour to discover whether there existed any secret article betwixt the Pope and Buonaparte which might compromise the interests of his master, was repeatedly discovered listening at the door of the apartment in which the discussions were carried on.

The articles which the Pope was obliged to accept at Tolentino, included the cession of Avignon and its territories, the appropriation of which, by France, had never yet been recognized; the resigning the legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna; the occupation of Ancona, the only port excepting Venice which Italy has in the Adriatic; the payment of 30 millions of livres, in specie or in valuable effects; the complete execution of the article in the armistice

of Bologna respecting the delivery of paintings, manuscripts, and objects of art; and several other stipulations of similar severity.

Buonaparte informs us, that it was a principal object in this treaty to compel the abolition of the Inquisition, from which he had only departed in consequence of receiving information, that it had ceased to be used as a religious tribunal, and subsisted only as a court of police. The conscience of the Pope seemed also so tenderly affected by the proposal, that he thought it safe to desist from it.

The same despatch, in which Buonaparte informs the Directory, that his committee of artist collectors "had made a good harvest of paintings in the Papal dominions, and which, with the objects of art ceded by the Pope, included almost all that was curious and valuable, excepting some few objects at Turin and Naples," conveyed to them a document of a very different kind. This was a respectful and almost reverential letter from Napoleon to the Pope, recommending to his Holiness to distrust such persons as might excite him to doubt the good intentions of France, assuring him that he would always find the Republic most sincere and faithful, and expressing in his own name the perfect esteem and veneration which he entertained for the person of his Holiness, and the extreme desire which he had to afford him proofs to that effect.

This letter furnished much amusement at the time, and seemed far less to intimate the sentiments of a Sans Culotte general, than those of a civilized highwayman of the old school of Macheath, who never dismissed the travellers whom he had plundered, without his sincere good wishes for the happy prosecution of their journey.

A more pleasing view of Buonaparte's character was exhibited about this time, in his conduct towards the little interesting Republic of San Marino. That state, which only acknowledges the Pope as a protector, not as a sovereign, had maintained for very many years an independence, which conquerors had spared either in contempt or in respect. It consists of a single mountain and a single town, and boasts about seven thousand inhabitants, governed by their own laws. Citizen Monge, the chief of the committee of collecting-artists, was sent deputy to San Marino to knit the bands of amity between the two Republics,—which might well resemble a union between Liliput and Brobdignag. There were no pictures in the little Republic, or they might have been a temptation to the citizen collector. The people of San Marino conducted themselves with much sagacity; and although more complimentary to Buonaparte than Diogenes to Alexander the Great, when he came to visit the philosopher in his tub, they showed the same judgment in eschewing too much courtesy. They respectfully declined an accession of territory, which could but have involved them in subsequent quarrels with the sovereign from whom it was to be wrested, and only accepted as an honorary gift the present of four field-pieces, being a train of artillery upon the scale of their military force, and of which, it is to be hoped, the Captain Regents of the little contented state will never have any occasion to make use.

Rome might, for the present at least, be considered as completely subjugated. Naples was at peace, if the signature of a treaty can create peace. At any rate, so distant from Rome, and so controlled by the defeat of the Papal arms—by the fear that the English fleet might be driven from the Mediterranean—and by their distance from the scene of action—the King of the Two Sicilies, or rather his wife, the high-spirited daughter of Maria Theresa, dared not offer the least interference with the purposes of the French general. Tuscany had apparently consented to owe her political existence to any degree of clemency or contempt which Buonaparte might extend to her; and, entertaining hopes of some convention betwixt the French and English, by which the Grand Duke's port of Leghorn might be restored to him, remained passive as the dead. The republic of Venice alone, feeling still the stimulus arising from her ancient im-

portance, and yet painfully conscious of her present want of power, strained every exertion to place herself in a respectable attitude. That city of lofty remembrances, the Tyre of the middle ages, whose traders were princes, and her merchants the honourable of the earth, fallen as she was from her former greatness, still presented some appearance of vigour. Her oligarchical government, so long known and so dreaded, for jealous precautions, political sagacity, the impenetrability of their plans, and the inflexibility of their rigour, still preserved the attitude of independence, and endeavoured, by raising additional regiments of Slavonians, disciplining their peasantry, who were of a very martial character, and forming military magazines of considerable extent, to maintain such an aspect, as might make their friendship to be courted, and their enmity to be feared. It was already evident that the Austrians, notwithstanding all their recent defeats, were again about to make head on their Italo-German frontier; and France, in opposing them, could not be indifferent to the neutrality of Venice, upon whose territories, to all appearance, Buonaparte must have rested the flank of his operations, in case of his advancing towards Friuli. So circumstanced, and when it was recollected that the mistress of the Adriatic had still fifty thousand men at her command, and those of a fierce and courageous description, chiefly consisting of Slavonians, Venice, even yet, was an enemy not to be lightly provoked. But the inhabitants were not unanimous, especially those of the Terra Firma, or mainland, who, not being enrolled in the golden book of the insular nobility of Venice, were discontented, and availed themselves of the encouragement and assistance of the new-created republics on the Po to throw off their allegiance. Brescia and Bergamo, in particular, were clamorous for independence.

Napoleon saw, in this state of dissension, the means of playing an adroit game; and while, on the one hand, he endeavoured to restrain, till a more favourable opportunity, the ardour of the patriots, he attempted, on the other, to convince the Senate, that they had no safe policy but in embracing at once the alliance of France, offensive and defensive, and joining their forces to those of the army with which he was about to move against the Austrians. He offered, on these conditions, to guarantee the possessions of the republic, even without exacting any modification of their oligarchical constitution. But Venice declared for an impartial neutrality. It had been, they said, their ancient and sage policy, nor would they now depart from it. "Remain then neuter," said Napoleon; "I consent to it. I march upon Vienna, yet will leave enough of French troops in Italy to control your republic.—But dismiss these new levies; and remark, that if, while I am in Germany, my communications shall be interrupted, my detachments cut off, or my convoys intercepted in the Venetian territory, the date of your republic is terminated. She will have brought on herself annihilation."

Lest these threats should be forgotten while he was at a distance, he took the best precautions in his power, by garrisoning advantageous points on the line of the Adige; and trusting partly to this defence, partly to the insurgents of Bergamo and Brescia, who, for their own sakes, would oppose any invasion of the mainland by their Venetian masters, whose yoke they had cast aside, Napoleon again unfurled his banners, and marched to new triumphs over yet untried opponents.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Archduke Charles—Compared with Napoleon—Fettered by the Aulic Council.—Napoleon, by a stratagem, passes the Tagliamento, and compels the Archduke to retreat.—Gradisca carried by storm.—Chiusa-Veneta taken by Massena, with the loss of 5000 Austrians, Baggage, Cannon, &c.—The Sea-ports of Trieste and Fiume occupied by the French.—Venice breaks the Neutrality, and commences Hostilities by a massacre of 100 Frenchmen at Verona.—Terrified on learning that an Armistice had taken place betwixt France and Austria—Circumstances which led to this.—The Archduke retreats by hasty marches on Vienna—His prospects of success in defending it.—The Government and People irresolute, and the Treaty of Leoben signed—Venice now makes the most humiliating submissions.—Napoleon's Speech to the Venetian Envoys—He declares War against Venice, and evades obeying the orders of the Directory to spare it.—The Great Council, on 31st May, concede everything to Buonaparte, and disperse in terror.—Terms granted by the French General.

THE victories of the Archduke Charles of Austria on the Rhine, and his high credit with the soldiers, seemed to point him out as the commander falling most naturally to be employed against the young general of the French republic, who, like a gifted hero of romance, had borne down successively all opponents who had presented themselves in the field. The opinions of Europe were suspended concerning the probable issue of the contest. Both generals were young, ambitious, enthusiastic in the military profession, and warmly beloved by their soldiers. The exploits of both had filled the trumpet of Fame; and although Buonaparte's success had been less uninterrupted, yet it could not be denied, that if the Archduke's plans were not equally brilliant and original with those of his great adversary, they were just and sound, and had been attended repeatedly with great results, and by the defeat of such men as Moreau and Jourdan. But there were two particulars in which the Austrian Prince fell far short of Napoleon,—first, in that ready, decided, and vigorous confidence, which seizes the favourable instant for the execution of plans resolved upon,—and secondly, in having the disadvantage to be subjected, notwithstanding his high rank, to the interference of the Aulic Council; who, sitting at Vienna, and ignorant of the changes and vicissitudes of the campaign, were yet, by the ancient and jealous laws of the Austrian empire, entitled to control his opinion, and prescribe beforehand the motions of the armies, while the generals intrusted with the execution of their schemes, had often no choice left but that of adherence to their instructions, however emerging circumstances might require a deviation.

But although the encounter betwixt these two distinguished young generals be highly interesting, our space will not permit us to detail the campaigns of Austria at the same length as those of Italy. The latter formed the commencement of Buonaparte's military career, and at no subsequent period of his life did he achieve the same wondrous victories against such an immense odds, or with such comparatively inadequate means. It was also necessary, in the outset of his military history, to show in minute detail the character of his tactics, and illustrate that spirit of energetic concentration, which, neglecting the extremities of an extended line of operations, combined his whole strength, like a bold and skilful fencer, for one thrust at a vital part, which, if successful, must needs be fatal. The astonishing rapidity of his movements, the audacious vivacity of his attack, having been so often described in individual cases, may now be passed over with general allusions; nor will we embarrass ourselves and our readers with minute details of positions, or encumber our pages with the names

of obscure villages, unless when there is some battle calling for a particular narrative, either from its importance or its singularity.

By the direction of the Aulic Council, the Archduke Charles had taken up his position at Friuli, where it had been settled that the sixth Austrian army, designed to act against Buonaparte for the defence of the Italo-German frontier, should be assembled. This position was strangely preferred to the Tyrol, where the Archduke could have formed a junction ten days sooner with an additional force of forty thousand men from the army of the Rhine, marching to reinforce his own troops,—men accustomed to fight and conquer under their leader's eye; whilst those with whom he occupied Friuli, and the line of the Piave, belonged to the hapless Imperial forces, which, under Beaulieu, Wurmser, and Alvinzi, had never encountered Buonaparte without incurring some notable defeat.

While the Archduke was yet expecting those reinforcements which were to form the strength of his army, his active adversary was strengthened by more than twenty thousand men, sent from the French armies on the Rhine, and which gave him at the moment a numerical superiority over the Austrian general. Instead, therefore, of waiting, as on former occasions, until the Imperialists should commence the war by descending into Italy, Napoleon resolved to anticipate the march of the succours expected by the Archduke, drive him from his position on the Italian frontiers, and follow him into Germany, even up to the walls of Vienna. No scheme appeared too bold for the general's imagination to form, or his genius to render practicable; and his soldiers, with the view before them of plunging into the midst of an immense empire, and placing chains of mountains betwixt them and every possibility of reinforcement or communication, were so confident in the talents of their leader, as to follow him under the most undoubting expectation of victory. The Directory had induced Buonaparte to expect a co-operation by a similar advance on the part of the armies of the Rhine, as had been attempted in the former campaign.

Buonaparte took the field in the beginning of March, advancing from Bassano. The Austrians had an army of observation under Lusignan on the banks of the Piave, but their principal force was stationed upon the Tagliamento, a river whose course is nearly thirty miles more to the eastward, though collateral with the Piave. The plains on the Tagliamento afforded facilities to the Archduke to employ the noble cavalry who have always been the boast of the Austrian army; and to dislodge him from the strong and mountainous country which he occupied, and which covered the road that penetrates between the mountains and the Adriatic, and forms the mode of communication in that quarter betwixt Vienna and Italy, through Carinthia, it was not only necessary that he should be pressed in front, a service which Buonaparte took upon himself, but also that a French division, occupying the mountains on the Prince's right, should precipitate his retreat by maintaining the perpetual threat of turning him on that wing. With this view, Massena had Buonaparte's orders, which he executed with equal skill and gallantry. He crossed the Piave about the eleventh March, and ascending that river, directed his course into the mountains towards Belluno, driving before him Lusignan's little corps of observation, and finally compelling his rear-guard, to the number of five hundred men, to surrender.

The Archduke Charles, in the meantime, continued to maintain his position on the Tagliamento, and the French approached the right bank, with Napoleon at their head, determined apparently to force a passage. Artillery and sharpshooters were disposed in such a manner as to render this a very hazardous attempt, while two beautiful lines of cavalry were drawn up, prepared to charge any troops who might make their way to the left bank, while they were yet in the confusion of landing.

A very simple stratagem disconcerted this fair display of resistance. After

a distant cannonade, and some skirmishing, the French army drew off, as if despairing to force their passage, moved to the rear, and took up apparently their bivouac for the night. The Archduke was deceived. He imagined that the French, who had marched all the preceding night, were fatigued, and he also withdrew from the bank of the river to his camp. But two hours afterwards, when all seemed profoundly quiet, the French army suddenly got under arms, and, forming in two lines, marched rapidly to the side of the river, ere the astonished Austrians were able to make the same dispositions as formerly for defence. Arrived on the margin, the first line instantly broke up into columns, which throwing themselves boldly into the stream, protected on the flanks by the cavalry, passed through and attained the opposite bank. They were repeatedly charged by the Austrian cavalry, but it was too late—they had gotten their footing, and kept it. The Archduke attempted to turn their flank, but was prevented by the second line of the French, and by their reserve of cavalry. He was compelled to retreat, leaving prisoners and cannon in the hands of the enemy. Such was the first disastrous meeting between the Archduke Charles and his future relative.

The Austrian Prince had the farther misfortune to learn, that Massena had, at the first sound of the cannonade, pushed across the Tagliamento, higher up than his line of defence, and destroying what troops he found before him, had occupied the passes of the Julian Alps at the sources of that river, and thus interposed himself between the Imperial right wing and the nearest communication with Vienna. Sensible of the importance of this obstacle, the Archduke hastened, if possible, to remove it. He brought up a fine column of grenadiers from the Rhine, which had just arrived at Klagenfurt, in his rear, and joining them to other troops, attacked Massena with the utmost fury, venturing his own person like a private soldier, and once or twice narrowly escaping being made prisoner. It was in vain—all in vain. He charged successively and repeatedly, even with the reserve of the grenadiers, but no exertion could change the fortune of the day.

Still the Archduke hoped to derive assistance from the natural or artificial defences of the strong country through which he was thus retreating, and in doing so was involuntarily introducing Buonaparte, after he should have surmounted the border frontier, into the most fertile provinces of his brother's empire. The Lisonzo, usually a deep and furious torrent, closed in by a chain of impassable mountains, seemed to oppose an insurmountable barrier to his daring pursuers. But nature, as well as events, fought against the Austrians. The stream, reduced by frost, was fordable in several places. The river thus passed, the town of Gradisca, which had been covered with field-works to protect the line of the Lisonzo, was surprised and carried by storm, and its garrison of two thousand five hundred men made prisoners, by the divisions of Bernadotte and Serrurier.

Pushed in every direction, the Austrians sustained every day additional and more severe losses. The strong fort of Chiusa-Veneta was occupied by Massena, who continued his active and indefatigable operations on the right of the retreating army. This success caused the envelopement, and dispersion or surrender, of a whole division of Austrians, five thousand of whom remained prisoners, while their baggage, cannon, colours, and all that constituted them an army, fell into the hands of the French. Four generals were made prisoners on this occasion; and many of the mountaineers of Carniola and Croatia, who had joined the Austrian army from their natural love of war, seeing that success appeared to have abandoned the Imperial cause, became despondent, broke up their corps, and retired as stragglers to their villages.

Buonaparte availed himself of their loss of courage, and had recourse to proclamations, a species of arms which he valued himself as much upon using to advantage, as he did upon his military fame. He assured them that the French

did not come into their country to innovate on their rights, religious customs, and manners. He exhorted them not to meddle in a war with which they had no concern, but encouraged them to afford assistance and furnish supplies to the French army, in payment of which he proposed to assign the public taxes which they had been in the habit of paying to the Emperor. His proposal seems to have reconciled the Carinthians to the presence of the French, or, more properly speaking, they submitted to the military exactions which they had no means of resisting. In the meanwhile, the French took possession of Trieste and Fiume, the only sea-ports belonging to Austria, where they seized much English merchandise, which was always a welcome prize, and of the quicksilver mines of Idria, where they found a valuable deposit of that mineral.

Napoleon repaired the fortifications of Klagenfurt, and converted it into a respectable place of arms, where he established his head-quarters. In a space of scarce twenty days, he had defeated the Austrians in ten combats, in the course of which Prince Charles had lost at least one-fourth of his army. The French had surmounted the southern chain of the Julian Alps; the northern line could, it was supposed, offer no obstacle sufficient to stop their irresistible general; and the Archduke, the pride and hope of the Austrian armies, had retired behind the river Meubr, and seemed to be totally without the means of covering Vienna.

There were, however, circumstances less favourable to the French, which require to be stated. When the campaign commenced, the French general Joubert was posted with his division in the gorge of the Tyrol above Trent, upon the same river Levisa, the line of which had been lost and won during the preceding winter. He was opposed by the Austrian generals Kerpen and Laudon, who, besides some regular regiments, had collected around them a number of the Tyrolese militia, who among their own mountains were at least equally formidable. They remained watching each other during the earlier part of the campaign; but the gaining of the battle of the Tagliamento was the signal for Joubert to commence the offensive. His directions were to push his way through the Tyrol to Brixen, at which place Napoleon expected he might hear news of the advance of the French armies from the Rhine, to co-operate in the march upon Vienna. But the Directory, fearing perhaps to trust nearly the whole force of the Republic in the hands of a general so successful and so ambitious as Napoleon, had not fulfilled their promises in this respect. The army of Moreau had not as yet crossed the Rhine.

Joubert, thus disappointed of his promised object, began to find himself in an embarrassing situation. The whole country was in insurrection around him, and a retreat in the line by which he had advanced, might have exposed him to great loss, if not to destruction. He determined, therefore, to elude the enemy, and, by descending the river Drave, to achieve a junction with his commander-in-chief Napoleon. He accomplished his difficult march by breaking down the bridges behind him, and thus arresting the progress of the enemy; but it was with difficulty, and not without loss, that he effected his proposed union, and his retreat from the Tyrol gave infinite spirits not only to the martial Tyrolese, but to all the favourers of Austria in the north of Italy. The Austrian general Laudon sallied from the Tyrol at the head of a considerable force, and compelled the slender body of French under Balland, to shut themselves up in garrisons; and their opponents were for the moment again lords of a part of Lombardy. They also re-occupied Trieste and Fiume, which Buonaparte had not been able sufficiently to garrison; so that the rear of the French army seemed to be endangered.

The Venetians, at this crisis, fatally for their ancient republic, if indeed its doom had not, as is most likely, been long before sealed, received with eager ears the accounts, exaggerated as they were by rumour, that the French were driven from the Tyrol, and the Austrians about to descend the Adige, and

resume their ancient empire in Italy. The senate were aware that neither their government nor their persons were acceptable to the French general, and that they had offended him irreconcilably by declining the intimate alliance and contribution of troops which he had demanded. He had parted from them with such menaces as were not easily to be misunderstood. They believed, if his vengeance might not be instant, it was only the more sure; and conceiving him now deeply engaged in Germany, and surrounded by the Austrian levies en masse from the warlike countries of Hungary and Croatia, they imagined that throwing their own weight into the scale at so opportune a moment, must weigh it down for ever. To chastise their insurgent subjects of Bergamo and Brescia, was an additional temptation.

Their mode of making war savoured of the ancient vindictive temper ascribed to their countrymen. An insurrection was secretly organised through all the territories which Venice still possessed on the mainland, and broke out, like the celebrated Sicilian vespers, in blood and massacre. In Verona they assassinated more than a hundred Frenchmen, many of them sick soldiers in the hospitals, —an abominable cruelty, which could not fail to bring a curse on their undertaking. Fioravante, a Venetian general, marched at the head of a body of Slavonians to besiege the forts of Verona, into which the remaining French had made their retreat, and where they defended themselves. Laudon made his appearance with his Austrians and Tyrolese, and it seemed as if the fortunes of Buonaparte had at length found a check.

But the awakening from this pleasing dream was equally sudden and dreadful. News arrived that preliminaries of peace had been agreed upon, and an armistice signed between France and Austria. Laudon, therefore, and the auxiliaries on whom the Venetians had so much relied, retired from Verona. The Lombards sent an army to the assistance of the French. The Slavonians, under Fioravante, after fighting vigorously, were compelled to surrender. The insurgent towns of Vicenza, Treviso, and Padua, were again occupied by the Republicans. Rumour proclaimed the terrible return of Napoleon and his army, and the ill-advised senate of Venice were lost in stupor, and scarce had sense left to decide betwixt unreserved submission and hopeless defence.

It was one of the most artful rules in Buonaparte's policy, that when he had his enemy at decided advantage, by some point having been attained which seemed to give a complete turn to the campaign in his favour, he seldom failed to offer peace, and peace upon conditions much more favourable than perhaps the opposite party expected. By doing this, he secured such immediate and undisputed fruits of his victory, as the treaty of peace contained; and he was sure of means to prosecute farther advantages at some future opportunity. He obtained, moreover, the character of generosity; and, in the present instance, he avoided the great danger of urging to bay so formidable a power as Austria, whose despair might be capable of the most formidable efforts.

With this purpose, and assuming for the first time that disregard for the usual ceremonial of courts, and etiquette of politics, which he afterwards seemed to have pleasure in displaying, he wrote a letter in person to the Archduke Charles on the subject of peace.

This composition affects that abrupt laconic severity of style, which cuts short argument, by laying down general maxims of philosophy of a trite character, and breaks through the usual laboured periphrastic introductions with which ordinary politicians preface their proposals, when desirous of entering upon a treaty. "It is the part of a brave soldier," he said, "to make war, but to wish for peace. The present strife has lasted six years. Have we not yet slain enough of men, and sufficiently outraged humanity? Peace is demanded on all sides. Europe at large has laid down the arms assumed against the French Republic. Your nation remains alone in hostility, and yet blood flows faster than ever. This sixth campaign has commenced under ominous circumstances—End how

it will, some thousands of men more will be slain on either side; and at length, after all, we must come to an agreement, for everything must have an end at last, even the angry passions of men. The Executive Directory made known to the Emperor their desire to put a period to the war which desolates both countries, but the intervention of the Court of London opposed it. Is there then no means of coming to an understanding, and must we continue to cut each other's throats for the interests or passions of a nation, herself a stranger to the miseries of war? You, the General-in-chief, who approach by birth so near to the crown, and are above all those petty passions which agitate ministers, and the members of government, will you resolve to be the benefactor of mankind, and the true saviour of Germany? Do not suppose that I mean by that expression to intimate, that it is impossible for you to defend yourself by force of arms; but under the supposition, that fortune were to become favourable to you, Germany would be equally exposed to ravage. With respect to my own feelings, General, if this proposition should be the means of saving one single man's life, I should prefer a civic crown so merited, to the melancholy glory attending military success."

The whole tone of the letter is ingeniously calculated to give the proposition the character of moderation, and at the same time to avoid the appearance of too ready an advance towards his object. The Archduke, after a space of two days, returned this brief answer, in which he stripped Buonaparte's proposal of its gilding, and treated it upon the footing of an ordinary proposal for a treaty of peace, made by a party, who finds it convenient for his interest:—"Unquestionably, sir, in making war, and in following the road prescribed by honour and duty, I desire as much as you the attainment of peace for the happiness of the people, and of humanity. Considering, however, that in the situation which I hold, it is no part of my business to inquire into and determine the quarrel of the belligerent powers; and that I am not furnished on the part of the Emperor with any plenipotentiary powers for treating, you will excuse me, General, if I do not enter into negotiation with you touching a matter of the highest importance, but which does not lie within my department. Whatever shall happen, either respecting the future chances of the war, or the prospect of peace, I request you to be equally convinced of my distinguished esteem."

The Archduke would willingly have made some advantage of this proposal, by obtaining an armistice of five hours, sufficient to enable him to form a junction with the corps of Kerpen, which, having left the Tyrol to come to the assistance of the commander-in-chief, was now within a short distance. But Buonaparte took care not to permit himself to be hampered by any such ill-timed engagement, and after some sharp fighting, in which the French as usual were successful, he was able to interpose such a force as to prevent the junction taking place.

Two encounters followed at Neumark and at Unzmark—both gave rise to fresh disasters, and the continued retreat of the Archduke Charles and the Imperial army. The French general then pressed forward on the road to Vienna, through mountain-passes and defiles, which could not have been opened otherwise than by turning them on the flank. But these natural fastnesses were no longer defences. Judenburg, the capital of Upper Styria, was abandoned to the French without a blow, and shortly after Buonaparte entered Gratz, the principal town of Lower Styria, with the same facility.

The Archduke now totally changed his plan of warfare. He no longer disputed the ground foot by foot, but began to retreat by hasty marches towards Vienna, determined to collect the last and utmost strength which the extensive states of the Emperor could supply, and fight for the existence, it might be, of his brother's throne, under the walls of his capital. However perilous this resolution might appear, it was worthy of the high-spirited prince by whom it was

adopted; and there were reasons, perhaps, besides those arising from soldierly pride and princely dignity, which seemed to recommend it.

The army with which the enterprising French general was now about to debouche from the mountains, and enter the very centre of Germany, had suffered considerably since the commencement of the campaign, not only by the sword, but by severity of weather, and the excessive fatigue which they endured in executing the rapid marches, by which their leader succeeded in securing victory; and the French armies on the Rhine had not, as the plan of the campaign dictated, made any movement in advance corresponding with the march of Buonaparte.

Nor, in the country which they were about to enter with diminished forces, could Buonaparte trust to the influence of the same moral feeling in the people invaded, which had paved the way to so many victories on the Rhine. The citizens of Austria, though living under a despotic government, are little sensible of its severities, and are sincerely attached to the Emperor, whose personal habits incline him to live with his people without much form, and mix in public amusements, or appear in the public walks, like a father in the midst of his family. The nobility were as ready as in former times to bring out their vassals, and a general knowledge of discipline is familiar to the German peasant as a part of his education. Hungary possessed still the high-spirited race of barons and cavaliers, who, in their great convocation in 1740, rose at once, and drawing their sabres, joined in the celebrated exclamation, "*Moriamur pro rege nostro, Maria Teresa!*" The Tyrol was in possession of its own warlike inhabitants, all in arms, and so far successful, as to have driven Joubert out of their mountains. Trieste and Fiume were retaken in the rear of the French army. Buonaparte had no line of communication when separated from Italy, and no means of obtaining supplies, but from a country which would probably be soon in insurrection in his rear, as well as on his flanks. A battle lost, when there was neither support, reserve, nor place of arms nearer than Klagenfurt, would have been annihilation. To add to these considerations, it was now known that the Venetian Republic had assumed a formidable and hostile aspect in Italy; by which, joined to a natural explosion of feeling, religious and national, the French cause was considerably endangered in that country. There were so many favourers of the old system, together with the general influence of the Catholic clergy, that it seemed not unlikely this insurrection might spread fast and far. Italy, in that case, would have been no effectual place of refuge to Buonaparte or his army. The Archduke enumerated all these advantages to the cabinet of Vienna, and exhorted them to stand the last cast of the bloody die.

But the terror, grief, and confusion, natural in a great metropolis, whose peace for the first time for so many years was alarmed with the approach of the unconquered and apparently fated general, who, having defeated and destroyed five of their choicest armies, was now driving under its walls the remnants of the last, though commanded by that prince whom they regarded as the hope and flower of Austrian warfare, opposed this daring resolution. The alarm was general, beginning with the court itself; and the most valuable property and treasure were packed up to be carried into Hungary, where the Royal Family determined to take refuge. It is worthy of mention, that among the fugitives of the Imperial House was the Arch-Duchess Maria Louisa, then between five and six years old, whom our imagination may conceive agitated by every species of childish terror derived from the approach of the victorious general, on whom she was, at a future and similar crisis, destined to bestow her hand.

The cries of the wealthy burghers were of course for peace. The enemy were within fourteen or fifteen days' march of their walls; nor had the city (perhaps fortunately) any fortifications, which in the modern state of war could

have made it defensible even for a day. They were, moreover, seconded by a party in the cabinet; and, in short, whether it chanced for good or for evil, the selfish principle of those who had much to lose, and were timid in proportion, predominated against that, which desired at all risks the continuance of a determined and obstinate defence. It required many lessons to convince both sovereign and people, that it is better to put all on the hazard—better even to lose all, than to sanction the being pillaged at different times, and by degrees, under pretence of friendship and amity. A bow which is forcibly strained back will regain its natural position; but if supple enough to yield of itself to the counter direction, it will never recover its elasticity.

The affairs, however, of the Austrians were in such a condition, that it could hardly be said whether the party who declared for peace, to obtain some respite from the distresses of the country, or those who wished to continue war with the chances of success which we have indicated, advised the least embarrassing course. The Court of Vienna finally adopted the alternative of treaty, and that of Leoben was set on foot.

Generals Bellegarde and Merfeld, on the part of the Emperor, presented themselves at the head-quarters of Buonaparte, 13th April 1797, and announced the desire of their sovereign for peace. Buonaparte granted a suspension of arms, to endure for five days only; which was afterwards extended, when the probability of the definitive treaty of peace was evident.

It is affirmed, that in the whole discussions respecting this most important armistice, Napoleon—as a conqueror whose victories had been in a certain degree his own, whose army had been supported and paid from the resources of the country which he conquered, who had received reinforcements from France only late and reluctantly, and who had recruited his army by new levies among the republicanized Italians—maintained an appearance of independence of the government of France. He had, even at this period, assumed a freedom of thought and action, the tenth part of the suspicion attached to which would have cost the most popular general his head in the times of Danton and Robespierre. But, though acquired slowly, and in counteraction to the once overpowering, and still powerful, democratic influence, the authority of Buonaparte was great; and indeed, the power which a conquering general attains, by means of his successes, in the bosom of his soldiers, becomes soon formidable to any species of government, where the soldier is not intimately interested in the liberties of the subject.

Yet it must not be supposed that Napoleon exhibited publicly any of that spirit of independence which the Directory appear to have dreaded, and which, according to the opinion which he himself intimates, seems to have delayed the promised co-operation, which was to be afforded by the eastern armies on the banks of the Rhine. Far from testifying such a feeling, his assertion of the rights of the Republic was decidedly striking, of which the following is a remarkable instance. The Austrian commissioner, in hopes to gain some credit for the admission, had stated in the preliminary articles of the convention, as a concession of consequence, that his Imperial Majesty acknowledged the French government in its present state. “Strike out that condition,” said Buonaparte, sternly; “the French Republic is like the sun in heaven. The misfortune lies with those who are so blind as to be ignorant of the existence of either.” It was gallantly spoken; but how strange to reflect, that the same individual, in three or four years afterwards, was able to place an extinguisher on one of those suns, without even an eclipse being the consequence.*

It is remarkable also, that while asserting to foreigners this supreme dignity of the French Republic, Buonaparte should have departed so far from the

* Buonaparte first mentions this circumstance as having taken place at Leoben, afterwards at the definitive treaty of Campo Formio. The effect is the same, wherever the words were spoken.

respect he owed its rulers. The preliminaries of peace were proposed for signature on the 18th April. But General Clarke, to whom the Directory had committed full powers to act in the matter, was still at Turin. He was understood to be the full confidant of his masters, and to have instructions to watch the motions of Buonaparte, nay to place him under arrest, should he see cause to doubt his fealty to the French government. Napoleon, nevertheless, did not hesitate to tender his individual signature and warranty, and these were readily admitted by the Austrian plenipotentiaries;—an ominous sign of the declension of the powers of the Directory, considering that a military general, without the support even of the commissioners from the government, or pro-consuls, as they were called, was regarded as sufficient to ratify a treaty of such consequence. No doubt seems to have been entertained that he had the power to perform what he had guaranteed; and the part which he acted was the more remarkable, considering the high commission of General Clarke.

The articles in the treaty of Leoben remained long secret; the cause of which appears to have been, that the high contracting parties were not willing comparisons should be made between the preliminaries as they were originally settled, and the strange and violent alterations which occurred in the definitive treaty of Campo Formio. These two treaties of pacification differed, the one from the other, in relation to the degree and manner how a meditated partition of the territory of Venice, of the Cisalpine republic, and other smaller powers, was to be accomplished, for the mutual benefit of France and Austria. It is melancholy to observe, but it is nevertheless an important truth, that there is no moment during which independent states of the second class have more occasion to be alarmed for their security, than when more powerful nations in their vicinity are about to conclude peace. It is so easy to accommodate these differences of the strong at the expense of such weaker states, as, if they are injured, have neither the power of making their complaints heard, nor of defending themselves by force, that, in the iron age in which it has been our fate to live, the injustice of such an arrangement has never been considered as offering any counterpoise to its great convenience, whatever the law of nations might teach to the contrary.

It is unnecessary to enter upon the subject of the preliminaries of Leoben, until we notice the treaty of Campo Formio, under which they were finally modified, and by which they were adjusted and controlled. It may be, however, the moment to state, that Buonaparte was considerably blamed, by the Directory and others, for stopping short in the career of conquest, and allowing the House of Austria terms which left her still formidable to France, when, said the censors, it would have cost him but another victory to blot the most constant and powerful enemy of the French Republic out of the map of Europe; or, at least, to confine her to her hereditary states in Germany. To such criticism he replied, in a despatch to the Directory from Leoben, during the progress of the treaty: "If at the commencement of these Italian campaigns I had made a point of going to Turin, I should never have passed the Po—had I insisted prematurely on advancing to Rome, I could never have secured Milan—and now had I made an indispensable object of reaching Vienna, I might have destroyed the Republic."

Such was his able and judicious defence of a conduct, which, by stopping short of some ultimate and extreme point apparently within his grasp, extracted every advantage from fear, which despair perhaps might not have yielded him, if the enemy had been driven to extremity. And it is remarkable, that the catastrophe of Napoleon himself was a corollary of the doctrine which he now laid down; for, had he not insisted upon penetrating to Moscow, there is no judging how much longer he might have held the empire of France.

The contents of the treaty of Leoben, so far as they were announced to the representatives of the French nation by the Directory, only made known as part

of the preliminaries, that the cession of the Belgic provinces, and of such a boundary as France might choose to demand upon the Rhine, had been admitted by Austria; and that she had consented to recognise a single Republic in Italy, to be composed out of those which had been provisionally established. But shortly afterwards it transpired, that Mantua, the subject of so much and such bloody contest, and the very citadel of Italy, as had appeared from the events of these sanguinary campaigns, was to be resigned to Austria, from whose tenacious grasp it had been wrenched with so much difficulty. This measure was unpopular; and it will be found that Buonaparte had the ingenuity, in the definitive treaty of peace, to substitute an indemnification, which he ought not to have given, and which was certainly the last which the Austrians should have accepted.

It was now the time for Venice to tremble. She had declared against the French in their absence; her vindictive population had murdered many of them; the resentment of the French soldiers was excited to the utmost, and the Venetians had no right to reckon upon the forbearance of their general. The treaty of Leoben left the Senate of that ancient state absolutely without support; nay, as they afterwards learned, Austria, after pleading their cause for a certain time, had ended by stipulating for a share of their spoils, which had been assigned to her by a secret article of the treaty. The doom of the oligarchy was pronounced ere Buonaparte had yet traversed the Noric and Julian Alps, for the purpose of enforcing it. By a letter to the Doge, dated from the capital of Upper Styria, Napoleon, bitterly upbraiding the senate for requiting his generosity with treachery and ingratitude, demanded that they should return by his aid-de-camp who bore the letter, their instant choice betwixt war and peace, and allowing them only four-and-twenty hours to disperse their insurgent peasantry, and submit to his clemency.

Junot, introduced into the senate, made the threats of his master ring in the astounded ears of the members, and by the blunt and rough manner of a soldier, who had risen from the ranks, added to the dismay of the trembling nobles. The senate returned a humble apology to Buonaparte, and despatched agents to deprecate his wrath. These envoys were doomed to experience one of those scenes of violence, which were in some degree natural to this extraordinary man, but to which in certain cases he seems to have designedly given way, in order to strike consternation into those whom he addressed. "Are the prisoners at liberty?" he said, with a stern voice, and without replying to the humble greetings of the terrified envoys. They answered with hesitation, that they had liberated the French, the Polish, and the Brescians, who had been made captive in the insurrectionary war. "I will have them all—all!" exclaimed Buonaparte—"all who are in prison on account of their political sentiments. I will go myself to destroy your dungeons on the Bridge of Tears—opinions shall be free—I will have no Inquisition. If all the prisoners are not set at instant liberty, the English envoy dismissed, the people disarmed, I declare instant war. I might have gone to Vienna if I had listed—I have concluded a peace with the Emperor—I have eighty thousand men, twenty gun-boats—I will hear of no Inquisition, and no Senate either—I will dictate the law to you—I will prove an Attila to Venice. If you cannot disarm your population, I will do it in your stead—your government is antiquated—it must crumble to pieces."

While Buonaparte, in these disjointed yet significant threats, stood before the deputies like the Argantes of Italy's heroic poet, and gave them the choice of peace and war with the air of a superior being, capable at once to dictate their fate, he had not yet heard of the massacre of Verona, or of the batteries of a Venetian fort on the Lido having fired upon a French vessel, who had run into the port to escape the pursuit of two armed Austrian ships. The vessel was alleged to have been sunk, and the master and some of the crew to have been

killed. The news of these fresh aggressions did not fail to aggravate his indignation to the highest pitch. The terrified deputies ventured to touch with delicacy on the subject of pecuniary atonement. Buonaparte's answer was worthy of a Roman. "If you could proffer me," he said, "the treasures of Peru—if you could strew the whole district with gold, it could not atone for the French blood which has been treacherously spilt."

Accordingly, on the 3d of May, Buonaparte declared war against Venice, and ordered the French minister to leave the city; the French troops, and those of the new Italian republics, were at the same time commanded to advance, and to destroy in their progress, wherever they found it displayed, the winged Lion of Saint Mark, the ancient emblem of Venetian sovereignty. The declaration is dated at Palma Nova.

It had been already acted upon by the French who were on the Venetian frontier, and by La Hotze, a remarkable character, who was then at the head of the army of the Italian republics of the new model, and the forces of the towns of Brescia and Bergamo, which aspired to the same independence. This commander was of Swiss extraction; an excellent young officer, and at that time enamoured of liberty on the French system, though he afterwards saw so much reason to change his opinions, that he lost his life, as we may have occasion to mention, fighting under the Austrian banners.

The terrified Senate of Venice proved unworthy descendants of the Zenos, Dandolo, and Morosinis, as the defenders of Christendom, and the proud opposers of Papal oppression. The best resource they could imagine to themselves, was to employ at Paris those golden means of intercession which Buonaparte had so sturdily rejected. Napoleon assures us, that they found favour by means of these weighty arguments. The Directory, moved, we are informed, by the motives of ten millions of French francs, transmitted from Venice in bills of exchange, sent to the General of Italy orders to spare the ancient senate and aristocracy. But the account of the transaction, with the manner in which the remittances were distributed, fell into the hands of Napoleon, by despatches intercepted at Milan. The members of the French government, whom these documents would have convicted of peculation and bribery, were compelled to be silent; and Buonaparte, availing himself of some chicanery as to certain legal solemnities, took it on him totally to disregard the orders he had received.

The Senate of Venice, rather stupified than stimulated by the excess of their danger, were holding on the 30th April a sort of privy council in the apartments of the Doge, when a letter from the commandant of their flotilla informed them, that the French were erecting fortifications on the low grounds contiguous to the lagoons or shallow channels which divide from the main land and from each other the little isles on which the amphibious Mistress of the Adriatic holds her foundation; and proposing, in the blunt style of a gallant sailor, to batter them to pieces about their ears before the works could be completed. Indeed, nothing would have been more easy than to defend the lagoons against an enemy, who, notwithstanding Napoleon's bravado, had not even a single boat. But the proposal, had it been made to an abbess and a convent of nuns, could scarce have appeared more extraordinary than it did to these degenerate nobles. Yet the sense of shame prevailed; and though trembling for the consequences of the order which they issued, the Senate directed that the admiral should proceed to action. Immediately after the order was received, their deliberations were interrupted by the thunder of the cannon on either side—the Venetian gun-boats pouring their fire on the van of the French army, which had begun to arrive at Fusina.

To interrupt these ominous sounds, two plenipotentiaries were despatched to make intercession with the French general; and to prevent delay, the Doge himself undertook to report the result.

The Grand Council was convoked on the 1st May; when the Doge, pale in

countenance, and disconcerted in demeanour, proposed, as the only means of safety, the admission of some democratic modifications into their forms, under the direction of General Buonaparte; or, in other words, to lay their institutions at the feet of the conqueror, to be re-modelled at his pleasure. Of six hundred and ninety patricians, only twenty-one dissented from a vote which inferred the absolute surrender of their constitution. The conditions to be agreed on were indeed declared subject to the revision of the Council; but this, in the circumstances, could only be considered as a clause intended to save appearances. The surrender must have been regarded as unconditional and total.

Amidst the dejection and confusion which possessed the government, some able intriguer (the secretary, it was said, of the French ambassador at Venice, whose principal had been recalled) contrived to induce the Venetian government to commit an act of absolute suicide, so as to spare Buonaparte the trouble and small degree of scandal which might attach to totally destroying the existence of the Republic.

On the 9th of May, as the committee of the Great Council were in close deliberation with the Doge, two strangers intruded upon those councils, which heretofore—such was the jealous severity of the oligarchy—were like those of supernatural beings, those who looked on them died. But now, affliction, confusion, and fear, had withdrawn the guards from these secret and mysterious chambers, and laid open to the intrusion of strangers those stern haunts of a suspicious oligarchy, where, in other days, an official or lictor of the government might have been punished with death even for too loud a foot-fall, far more for the fatal crime of having heard more than was designed to come to his knowledge. All this was now ended; and without check or rebuke the two strangers were permitted to communicate with the senate by writing. Their advice, which had the terms of a command, was, to anticipate the intended reforms of the French—to dissolve the present government—throw open their prisons—disband their Slavonian soldiers—plant the tree of liberty on the Place of Saint Marc, and to take other popular measures of the same nature, the least of which, proposed but a few months before, would have been a signal of death to the individual who had dared to hint at it.

An English satirist has told us a story of a man persuaded by an eloquent friend to hang himself, in order to preserve his life.* The story of the fall of Venice vindicates the boldness of the satire. It does not appear that Buonaparte could have gone farther, nay it seems unlikely he would have gone so far, as was now recommended.

As the friendly advisers had hinted that the utmost speed was necessary, the committee scarce interposed an interval of three days, between receiving the advice and recommending it to the Great Council; and began in the meanwhile to anticipate the destruction of their government and surrender of their city, by dismantling their fleet and disbanding their soldiers.

At length the Great Council assembled on the 31st May. The Doge had commenced a pathetic discourse on the extremities to which the country was reduced, when an irregular discharge of fire-arms took place under the very windows of the Council-house. All started up in confusion. Some supposed the Slavonians were plundering the citizens; some that the lower orders had risen on the nobility; others, that the French had entered Venice, and were proceeding to sack and pillage it. The terrified and timid counsellors did not wait to inquire what was the real cause of the disturbance, but hurried forward, like sheep, in the path which had been indicated to them. They hastened to despoil their ancient government of all authority, to sign in a

* Dr. Arbuthnot, in the History of John Bull.

manner its sentence of civil death—added every thing which could render the sacrifice more agreeable to Buonaparte—and separated in confusion, but under the impression that they had taken the best measure in their power for quelling the tumult, by meeting the wishes of the predominant party. But this was by no means the case. On the contrary, they had the misfortune to find that the insurrection, of which the firing was the signal, was directed not against the aristocrats, but against those who proposed the surrender of the national independence. Armed bands shouted, “Long live Saint Marc, and perish foreign domination!” Others indeed there were, who displayed in opposition three-coloured banners, with the war-cry of “Liberty for ever!” The disbanded and mutinous soldiers mixed among these hostile groups, and threatened the town with fire and pillage.

Amid this horrible confusion, and while the parties were firing on each other, a provisional government was hastily named. Boats were dispatched to bring three thousand French soldiers into the city. These took possession of the Place of Saint Marc, while some of the inhabitants shouted; but the greater part, who were probably not the less sensible of the execrable tyranny of the old aristocracy, saw it fall in mournful silence, because there fell, along with the ancient institutions of their country, however little some of these were to be regretted, the honour and independence of the state itself.

The terms which the French granted, or rather imposed, appeared sufficiently moderate, so far as they were made public. They announced that the foreign troops would remain so long, and no longer, than might be necessary to protect the peace of Venice—they undertook to guarantee the public debt, and the payment of the pensions allowed to the impoverished gentry. They required, indeed, the continuance of the prosecution against the commander of that fort of Luco who had fired on the French vessel; but all other offenders were pardoned, and Buonaparte afterwards suffered even this affair to pass into oblivion; which excited doubt whether the transaction had ever been so serious as had been alleged.

Five secret and less palatable articles attended these avowed conditions. One provided for the various exchanges of territory which had been already settled at the Venetian expense betwixt Austria and France. The second and third stipulated the payment of three millions of francs in specie, and as many in naval stores. Another prescribed the cession of three ships of war, and of two frigates, armed and equipped. A fifth ratified the exaction, in the usual style of French cupidity, of twenty pictures and five hundred manuscripts.

It will be seen hereafter what advantages the Venetians purchased by all these unconscionable conditions. At the moment, they understood that the stipulations were to imply a guarantee of the independent existence of their country as a democratical state. In the meanwhile, the necessity for raising the supplies to gratify the rapacity of the French, obliged the provisional government to have recourse to forced loans; and in this manner they inhospitably plundered the Duke of Modena (who had fled to Venice for refuge when Buonaparte first entered Lombardy) of his remaining treasure, amounting to one hundred and ninety thousand sequins.

† CHAPTER XXVII.

Napoleon's amatory Correspondence with Josephine.—His Court at Montebello.—Negotiations and Pleasure mingled there.—Genoa.—Revolutionary spirit of the Genoese.—They rise in insurrection, but are quelled by the Government, and the French plundered and imprisoned.—Buonaparte interferes, and appoints the outlines of a new Government.—Sardinia.—Naples.—The Cispadane, Transpadane, and Emilian Republics, united under the name of the Cisalpine Republic.—The Valteline.—The Grisons.—The Valteline united to Lombardy.—Great improvement of Italy, and the Italian Character, from these changes.—Difficulties in the way of Pacification between France and Austria.—The Directory and Napoleon take different views.—Treaty of Campo Formio.—Buonaparte takes leave of the Army of Italy, to act as French Plenipotentiary at Rastadt.

WHEN peace returns, it brings back the domestic affections, and affords the means of indulging them. Buonaparte was yet a bridegroom, though he had now been two years married, and upwards. A part of his correspondence with his bride has been preserved,* and gives a curious picture of a temperament as fiery in love as in war. The language of the conqueror, who was disposing of states at his pleasure, and defeating the most celebrated commanders of the time, is as enthusiastic as that of an Arcadian. We cannot suppress the truth, that (in passages which we certainly shall not quote) it carries a tone of indelicacy, which, notwithstanding the intimacy of the married state, an English husband would not use, nor an English wife consider as the becoming expression of connubial affection. There seems no doubt, however, that the attachment which these letters indicate was perfectly sincere, and on one occasion at least, it was chivalrously expressed;—"Wurmser shall buy dearly the tears which he makes you shed!"

* It is published in a Tour through the Netherlands, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Savoy, and France, in the years 1821-2, by Charles Tennant, Esq. Longman & Co. London, 2 vols. 8vo. Autographs of the letters are given, and there seems no reason to doubt their authenticity. The following may serve as a specimen, and will perhaps confirm the opinion of a great lawyer, that love-letters seem the most unutterable nonsense in the world to all but the person who writes, and the party who receives them:—

"By what art is it that you have been able to captivate all my faculties, and to concentrate in yourself my moral existence? It is a magic, my sweet love, which will finish only with my life. To live for Josephine—there is the history of my life. I am trying to reach you,—I am dying to be near you. Fool that I am, I do not perceive that I increase the distance between us. What lands, what countries separate us! What a time before you read these weak expressions of a troubled soul in which you reign! Ah! my adorable wife, I know not what fate awaits me, but if it keep me much longer from you it will be insupportable,—my courage will not go so far. There was a time when I was proud of my courage; and sometimes, when contemplating on the ills that man could do me, on the fate which destiny could reserve for me, I fixed my eyes steadfastly on the most unheard-of misfortunes without a frown, without alarm;—but now the idea that my Josephine may be unwell, the idea that she may be ill, and, above all, the cruel, the fatal thought, that she may love me less, withers my soul, stops my blood, renders me sad, cast down, and leaves me not even the courage of fury and despair. Formerly I used often to say to myself, men could not hurt him who could die without regret; but, now, to die without being loved by thee, to die without that certainty, is the torment of hell; it is the lively and striking image of absolute annihilation—I feel as if I were stifled. My incomparable companion, thou whom fate has destined to make along with me the painful journey of life, the day on which I shall cease to possess thy heart will be the day on which parched nature will be to me without warmth or vegetation.

"I stop, my sweet love, my soul is sad—my body is fatigued—my head is giddy—men disgust me—I ought to hate them—they separate me from my beloved.

"I am at Port Maurice, near Oneille; to-morrow I shall be at Albenga; the two armies are in motion—We are endeavouring to deceive each other—Victory to the most skilful! I am pretty well satisfied with Beaulieu—If he alarm me much he is a better man than his predecessor. I shall beat him I hope in good style. Do not be uneasy—love me as your eyes—but that is not enough—as yourself, more than yourself, than your thought, your mind, your sight, your all. Sweet love, forgive me,—I am sinking. Nature is weak for him who feels strongly, for him whom you love!"

It appears from this correspondence that Josephine had rejoined her husband under the guardianship of Junot, when he returned from Paris, after having executed his mission of delivering to the Directory, and representatives of the French people, the banners and colours taken from Beaulieu. In December 1796, Josephine was at Genoa, where she was received with studied magnificence, by those in that ancient state who adhered to the French interest, and where, to the scandal of the rigid Catholics, the company continued assembled, at a ball given by Monsieur de Serva, till a late hour on Friday morning, despite the presence of a senator having in his pocket, but not venturing to enforce, a decree of the senate for the better observation of the fast day upon the occasion. These, however, were probably only occasional visits; but after the signature of the treaty of Leoben, and during the various negotiations which took place before it was finally adjusted, as ratified at Campo Formio, Josephine lived in domestic society with her husband, at the beautiful seat, or rather palace, of Montebello.

This villa, celebrated from the important negotiations of which it was the scene, is situated a few leagues from Milan, on a gently sloping hill, which commands an extensive prospect over the fertile plains of Lombardy. The ladies of the highest rank, as well as those celebrated for beauty and accomplishments,—all, in short, who could add charms to society,—were daily paying their homage to Josephine, who received them with a felicity of address which seemed as if she had been born for exercising the high courtesies that devolved upon the wife of so distinguished a person as Napoleon.

Negotiations proceeded amid gaiety and pleasure. The various ministers and envoys of Austria, of the Pope, of the Kings of Naples and Sardinia, of the Duke of Parma, of the Swiss Cantons, of several of the Princes of Germany,—the throng of generals, of persons in authority, of deputies of towns,—with the daily arrival and dispatch of numerous couriers, the bustle of important business, mingled with fetes and entertainments, with balls and with hunting parties,—gave the picture of a splendid court, and the assemblage was called accordingly, by the Italians, the Court of Montebello. It was such in point of importance; for the deliberations agitated there were to regulate the political relations of Germany, and decide the fate of the King of Sardinia, of Switzerland, of Venice, of Genoa; all destined to hear from the voice of Napoleon, the terms on which their national existence was to be prolonged or terminated.

Montebello was not less the abode of pleasure. The sovereigns of this diplomatic and military court made excursions to the Lago Maggiore, to Lago di Como, to the Borromean islands, and occupied at pleasure the villas which surround those delicious regions. Every town, every village, desired to distinguish itself by some peculiar mark of homage and respect to him, whom they then named the Liberator of Italy. These expressions are in a great measure those of Napoleon himself, who seems to have looked back on this period of his life with warmer recollections of pleasurable enjoyment than he had experienced on any other occasion.

It was probably the happiest time of his life. Honour, beyond that of a crowned head, was his own, and had the full relish of novelty to a mind which two or three years before was pining in obscurity. Power was his, and he had not experienced its cares and risks; high hopes were formed of him by all around, and he had not yet disappointed them. He was in the flower of youth, and married to the woman of his heart. Above all, he had the glow of Hope, which was marshalling him even to more exalted dominion; and he had not yet become aware that possession brings satiety, and that all earthly desires and wishes terminate, when fully attained, in vanity and vexation of spirit.

The various objects which occupied Buonaparte's mind during this busy

yet pleasing interval, were the affairs of Genoa, of Sardinia, of Naples, of the Cisalpine Republic, of the Grisons, and lastly, and by far the most important of them, the definitive treaty with Austria, which involved the annihilation of Venice as an independent state.

Genoa, the proud rival of Venice, had never attained the same permanent importance with that sister republic; but her nobility, who still administered her government according to the model assigned them by Andrew Doria, preserved more national spirit, and a more warlike disposition. The neighbourhood of France, and the prevalence of her opinions, had stirred up among the citizens of the middling class a party, taking the name of Morandists, from a club so termed, whose object it was to break down the oligarchy, and revolutionize the government. The nobles were naturally opposed to this, and a large body of the populace, much employed by them, and strict catholics, were ready to second them in their defence.

The establishment of two Italian democracies upon the Po, made the Genoese revolutionists conceive the time was arrived when their own state ought to pass through a similar ordeal of regeneration. They mustered their strength, and petitioned the Doge for the abolition of the government as it existed, and the adoption of a democratic model. The Doge condescended so far to their demand, as to name a committee of nine persons, five of them of plebeian birth, to consider and report on the means of infusing a more popular spirit into the constitution.

The three chief Inquisitors of State, or Censors, as the actual rulers of the oligarchy were entitled, opposed the spirit of religious enthusiasm to that of democratic zeal. They employed the pulpit and the confessional as the means of warning good Catholics against the change demanded by the Morandists—they exposed the Holy Sacrament, and made processions and public prayers, as if threatened with a descent of the Algerines.

Meanwhile the Morandists took up arms, displayed the French colours, and conceiving their enterprise was on the point of success, seized the gate of the arsenal and that of the harbour. But their triumph was short. Ten thousand armed labourers started as from out of the earth, under the command of their syndics, or municipal officers, with cries of "Viva Maria!" and declared for the aristocracy. The insurgents, totally defeated, were compelled to shut themselves up in their houses, where they were assailed by the stronger party, and finally routed. The French residing in Genoa were maltreated by the prevailing party, their houses pillaged, and they themselves dragged to prison.

The last circumstance gave Buonaparte an ostensible right to interfere, which he would probably have done even had no such violence been committed. He sent his aid-de-camp La Vallette to Genoa, with the threat of instantly moving against the city a division of his army, unless the prisoners were set at liberty, the aristocratic party disarmed, and such alterations, or rather such a complete change of government adopted, as should be agreeable to the French commander-in-chief. Against this there was no appeal. The Inquisitors were laid under arrest, for having defended, with the assistance of their fellow-citizens, the existing institutions of the state; and the Doge, with two other magistrates of the first rank, went to learn at Montebello, the head-quarters of Napoleon, what was to be the future fate of the city, proudly called of Palaces. They received the outlines of such a democracy as Napoleon conceived suitable for them; and he appears to have been unusually favourable to the state, which, according to the French affectation of doing everything upon a classical model, now underwent revolutionary baptism, and was called the Ligurian Republic. It was stipulated, that the French who had suffered should be indemnified; but no contributions were exacted

for the use of the French army, nor did the collections and cabinets of Genoa pay any tribute to the Parisian Museum.

Shortly after, the democratic party having gone so far as to exclude the nobles from the government, and from all offices of trust, called down by doing so a severe admonition from Buonaparte. He discharged them to offend the prejudices, or insult the feelings of the more scrupulous Catholics, declaring farther, that to exclude those of noble birth from public functions, is a revolting piece of injustice, and, in fact, as criminal as the worst of the errors of the patricians. Buonaparte says he felt a partiality for Genoa; and the comparative liberality with which he treated the state on this occasion, furnishes a good proof that he did so.

The King of Sardinia had been prostrated at the feet of France by the armistice of Cherasco, which concluded Napoleon's first campaign; and that sagacious leader had been long desirous that the Directory should raise the royal suppliant (for he could be termed little else) into some semblance of regal dignity, so as to make his power available as an ally. Nay, General Clarke had, 5th April 1797, subscribed, with the representative of his Sardinian Majesty, a treaty offensive and defensive, by which Napoleon expected to add to the army under his command four thousand Sardinian or Piedmontese infantry, and five hundred cavalry; and he reckoned much on this contingent, in case of the war being renewed with Austria. But the Directory shifted and evaded his solicitations, and declined confirming this treaty, probably because they considered the army under his command as already sufficiently strong, being, as the soldiers were, so devoted to their leader. At length, however, the treaty was ratified, but too late to serve Buonaparte's object.

Naples, whose conduct had been vacillating and insincere, as events seemed to promise victory or threaten defeat to the French general, experienced, notwithstanding, when he was in the height of triumph, the benefit of his powerful intercession with the government, and retained the full advantage secured to her by the treaty of Paris of 10th October 1796.

A most important subject of consideration remained after the pacification of Italy, respecting the mode in which the new republics were to be governed, and the extent of territory which should be assigned to them. On this subject there had been long discussions; and as there was much animosity and ancient grudge betwixt some of the Italian cities and provinces, it was no very easy matter to convince them, that their true interest lay in as many of them being united under one energetic and active government, as should render them a power of some importance, instead of being divided as heretofore into petty states, which could not offer effectual resistance even to invasion on the part of a power of the second class, much more if attacked by France or Austria.

The formation of a compact and independent state in the north of Italy, was what Napoleon had much at heart. But the Cispadane and Transpadane Republics were alike averse to a union, and that of Romagna had declined on its part a junction with the Transpadane commonwealth, and set up for a puny and feeble independence, under the title of the Emilian Republic. Buonaparte was enabled to overcome these grudgings and heart-burnings, by pointing out to them the General Republic, which it was now his system to create, as being destined to form the kernel of a state, which should be enlarged from time to time as opportunities offered, until it should include all Italy under one single government. This flattering prospect, in assigning to Italy, though at some distant date, the probability of forming one great country, united in itself, and independent of the rest of Europe, instead of being, as now, parcelled out into petty states, naturally overcame all the local dislikes and predilections which might have prevented the union of the Cispadane,

Transpadane, and Emilian Republics into one, and that important measure was resolved upon accordingly.

The Cisalpine Republic was the name fixed upon, to designate the united commonwealth. The French would more willingly have named it, with respect to Paris, the Transalpine Republic; but that would have been innovating upon the ancient title which Rome has to be the central point, with reference to which all other parts of Italy assume their local description. It would have destroyed all classical propriety, and have confused historical recollections, if, what had hitherto been called the Ultramontane side of the Alps, had, to gratify Parisian vanity, been termed the Hither side of the same chain of mountains.

The constitution assigned to the Cisalpine Republic, was the same which the French had last of all adopted, in what they called the year five, having a Directory of executive administrators, and two Councils. They were installed upon the 30th of June 1797. Four members of the Directory were named by Buonaparte, and the addition of a fifth was promised with all convenient speed. On the 14th of July following, a review was made of thirty thousand national guards. The fortresses of Lombardy, and the other districts, were delivered up to the local authorities, and the French army, retiring from the territories of the new republic, took up cantonments in the Venetian states. Proclamation had already been made, that the states belonging to the Cisalpine Republic having been acquired by France by the right of conquest, she had used her privilege to form them into their present free and independent government, which, already recognized by the Emperor and the Directory, could not fail to be acknowledged within a short time by all the other powers of Europe.

Buonaparte soon after showed that he was serious in his design of enlarging the Cisalpine Republic, as opportunity could be made to serve. There are three valleys, termed the Valteline districts, which run down from the Swiss mountains towards the Lake of Como. The natives of the Valteline are about one hundred and sixty thousand souls. They speak Italian, and are chiefly of the Catholic persuasion. These valleys were at this period the subjects of the Swiss Cantons, called the Grisons, not being a part of their league, or enjoying any of their privileges, but standing towards the Swiss community, generally and individually, in the rank of vassals to sovereigns. This situation of thralldom and dependence was hard to endure, and dishonourable in itself; and we cannot be surprised that, when the nations around them were called upon to enjoy liberty and independence, the inhabitants of the Valteline should have driven their Swiss garrisons out of their valleys, adopted the symbol of Italian freedom, and carried their complaints against the oppression of their German and Protestant masters to the feet of Buonaparte.

The inhabitants of the Valteline unquestionably had a right to assert their natural liberty, which is incapable of suffering prescription; but it is not equally clear how the French could, according to the law of nations, claim any title to interfere between them and the Grisons, with whom, as well as with the whole Swiss Union, they were in profound peace. This scruple seems to have struck Buonaparte's own mind. He pretended, however, to assume that the Milanese government had a right to interfere, and his mediation was so far recognised, that the Grisons pleaded before him in answer to their contumacious vassals. Buonaparte gave his opinion, by advising the canton of the Grisons, which consists of three leagues, to admit their Valteline subjects to a share of their franchises, in the character of a fourth association. The moderation of the proposal may be admitted to excuse the irregularity of the interference.

The representatives of the Grey League were, notwithstanding, profoundly

hurt at a proposal which went to make their vassals their brother freemen, and to establish the equality of the Italian serf, who drank of the Adda, with the free-born Switzer, who quaffed the waters of the Rhine. As they turned a deaf ear to his proposal, deserted his tribunal, and endeavoured to find support at Bern, Paris, Vienna, and elsewhere, Napoleon resolved to proceed against them in default of appearance ; and declaring, that as the Grisons had failed to appear before him, or to comply with his injunctions, by admitting the people of the Valteline to be parties to their league, he therefore adjudged the state, or district, of the Valteline, in time coming, to belong to and be part of the Cisalpine republic. The Grisons in vain humbled themselves when it was too late, and protested their readiness to plead before a mediator too powerful to be declined under any ground known in law ; and the Valteline territory was adjudged inalienably annexed to, and united with Lombardy, of which, doubtless, it forms, from manners and contiguity, a natural portion.

The existence of a state having free institutions, however imperfect, seemed to work an almost instant amelioration on the character of the people of the north of Italy. The effeminacy and trifling habits which resigned all the period of youth to intrigue and amusement, began to give place to firmer and more manly virtues—to the desire of honourable minds to distinguish themselves in arts and arms. Buonaparte had himself said, that twenty years would be necessary to work a radical change on the national character of the Italians ; but even already those seeds were sown, among a people hitherto frivolous because excluded from public business, and timorous because they were not permitted the use of arms, which afterwards made the Italians of the north equal the French themselves in braving the terrors of war, besides producing several civil characters of eminence.

Amid those subordinate discussions, as they might be termed, in comparison to the negotiations betwixt Austria and France, these two high contracting parties found great difficulty in agreeing as to the pacific superstructure which they should build upon the foundation which had been laid by the preliminaries exchanged at Leoben. Nay, it seemed as if some of the principal stipulations, which had been there agreed upon as the corner-stones of their treaty, were even already beginning to be unsettled.

It will be remembered, that, in exchange for the cession of Flanders, and of all the countries on the left side of the Rhine, including the strong city of Mayence, which she was to yield up to France in perpetuity, Austria stipulated an indemnification on some other frontier. The original project bore, that the Lombardic Republic, since termed the Cisalpine, should have all the territories extending from Piedmont, eastward to the river Oglio. Those to the westward of that river were to be ceded to Austria, as an equivalent for the cession of Belgium, and the left bank of the Rhine. The Oglio, rising in the Alps, descends through the fertile districts of Brescia and Cremasco, and falls into the Po near Borgo-forte, inclosing Mantua on its left bank, which strong fortress, the citadel of Italy, was, by this allocation, to be restored to Austria. There were farther compensations assigned to the Emperor, by the preliminaries of Leoben. Venice was to be deprived of her territories on the mainland, which were to be confiscated to augment the indemnity destined for the empire ; and this, although Venice, as far as Buonaparte yet knew, had been faithful to the neutrality she had adopted. To redeem this piece of injustice, another was to be perpetrated. The state of Venice was to receive the legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna, in lieu of the dominions which she was to cede to Austria ; and these legations, it must not be forgotten, were the principal materials of the Transpadane Republic, founded by Buonaparte himself. These, however, with their population, which he had led to hope for a free popular government, he was now about to turn over to

the dominion of Venice, the most jealous oligarchy in the world, which was not likely to forgive those who had been forward in expressing a desire of freedom. This was the first concoction of the treaty of Leoben, from which it appears that the negotiators of the two great powers regarded the secondary and weaker states, whether ancient or of modern erection, merely as make-weights, to be thrown into either scale, as might be necessary to adjust the balance.

It is true, the infant Cispadane Republic escaped the fate to which its patron and founder was about to resign it; for, after this arrangement had been provisionally adjusted, news came of the insurrection of Venice, the attack upon the French through her whole territory, and the massacre at Verona. This aggression placed the ancient Republic, so far as France was concerned, in the light of a hostile power, and entitled Buonaparte to deal with her as a conquered one, perhaps to divide, or altogether to annihilate her. But, on the other hand, he had received their submission, ratified the establishment of their new popular constitution, and possessed himself of the city, under pretence of assigning it a free government, according to the general hope which he had held out to Italy at large. The right of conquest was limited by the terms on which surrender had been accepted. Austria, on the other hand, was the more deeply bound to have protected the ancient republic, for it was in her cause that Venice so rashly assumed arms; but such is the gratitude of nations, such the faith of politicians, that she appears, from the beginning, to have had no scruple in profiting by the spoils of an ally, who had received a death-wound in her cause.

By the time the negotiators met for finally discussing the preliminaries, the Directory of France, either to thwart Buonaparte, whose superiority became too visible, or because they actually entertained the fears they expressed, were determined that Mantua, which had been taken with such difficulty, should remain the bulwark of the Cisalpine Republic, instead of returning to be once more that of the Austrian territories in Italy. The Imperial plenipotentiaries insisted, on the other hand, that Mantua was absolutely necessary to the safety of their Italian possessions, and became more so from the peculiar character of their new neighbour, the Cisalpine Republic, whose example was likely to be so perilous to the adjacent dependencies of an ancient monarchy. To get over this difficulty, the French general proposed that the remaining dominions of Venice should be also divided betwixt Austria and France, the latter obtaining possession of the Albanian territories and the Ionian islands belonging to the republic, of which the high contracting powers signed the death-warrant; while Istria, Dalmatia, Venice herself, and all her other dominions, should be appropriated to Austria. The latter power, through her minister, consented to this arrangement with as little scruple, as to the former appropriation of her forlorn ally's possessions on the Terra Firma.

But as fast as obstacles were removed on one side, they appeared to start up on another, and a sort of pause ensued in the deliberations, which neither party seemed to wish to push to a close. In fact, both Napoleon, plenipotentiary for France, and Count Cobentzel, a man of great diplomatic skill and address, who took the principal management on the part of Austria, were sufficiently aware that the French government, long disunited, was in the act of approaching to a crisis. This accordingly took place, under circumstances to be hereafter noticed, on 18th Fructidor, creating, by a new revolutionary movement, a total change of administration. When this revolution was accomplished, the Directory, who accomplished it, feeling themselves more strong, appeared to lay aside the idea of peace, and showed a strong disposition to push their advantages to the utmost.

Buonaparte was opposed to this. He knew that if war was resumed, the difficulties of the campaign would be thrown on him, and the blame also, if

the results were not happy. He was determined, therefore, in virtue of his full powers, to bring the matter to a conclusion, whether the Directory would or not. For this purpose he confronted Cobentzel, who still saw his game in gaining delay, with the sternness of a military envoy. On the 16th October, the conferences were renewed upon the former grounds, and Cobentzel went over the whole subject of the indemnifications, insisting that Mantua, and the line of the Adige, should be granted to the Emperor, threatening to bring down the Russians in case the war should be renewed, and insinuating that Buonaparte sacrificed the desire of peace to his military fame, and desired a renewal of the war. Napoleon, with stern but restrained indignation, took from a bracket an ornamental piece of china, on which Cobentzel set some value, as being a present from the Empress Catharine. "The truce," he said, "is then ended, and war declared. But beware—I will break your empire into as many fragments as that potsherd." He dashed the piece of china against the hearth, and withdrew abruptly. Again we are reminded of the Argantes of Tasso.*

The Austrian plenipotentiaries no longer hesitated to submit to all Napoleon's demands, rather than again see him commence his tremendous career of irresistible invasion. The treaty of Campo Formio therefore was signed; not the less promptly, perhaps, that the affairs at Paris appeared so doubtful as to invite an ambitious and aspiring man like Napoleon to approach the scene where honours and power were distributed, and where jarring factions seemed to await the influence of a character so distinguished and so determined.

The fate of Venice, more from her ancient history than either the value of her institutions, which were execrable, or the importance of her late existence, still dwells somewhat on the memory. The ancient republic fell "as a fool dieth." The aristocrats cursed the selfishness of Austria, by whom they were swallowed up, though they had perilled themselves in her cause. The republicans hastened to escape from Austrian domination, grinding their teeth with rage, and cursing no less the egotistic policy of the French, who, making a convenient pretext of their interest, had pretended to assign them a free constitution, and then resigned them to become the vassals of a despotic government.

The French secretary of legation, who had played a remarkably active part during the Revolution, hazarded a remonstrance to Buonaparte on the surrender of Venice to Austria, instead of its being formed into a free democracy, or united with the Cisalpine Republic. Buonaparte laughed to scorn a man, whose views were still fixed on diffusing and propagating the principles of Jacobinism. "I have received your letter," was the stern and contemptuous reply, "and cannot comprehend it. The Republic of France is not bound by any treaty, to sacrifice its interests and advantages to the Committee of Public Safety in Venice, or to any other class of individuals. France does not make war in behalf and for the benefit of others.† I know it costs nothing for a few chattering declaimers, whom I might better describe as madmen, to talk of an universal republic—I wish they would try a winter campaign. The Venetian Republic exists no longer. Effeminate, corrupted, treacherous, and hypocritical, the Venetians are unfit for liberty. If she has the spirit to appreciate, or courage to assert it, the time is not unfavourable—

* *Spiegò quel crudo il seno, o'l manto scosso,
Ed a guerra mortal, disse, vi sfido;
E'l disse in atto sì feroce ed empio
Che parve aprir di Giano il chiuso tempio.*

La Gerusalemme Liberata, Canto II.

† The language of injustice is alike in similar instances. When Edward I., in the course of over-running Scotland, was reminded of the claims of the candidate for the throne, in whose cause he had pretended to take arms, he answered in the very words of Buonaparte,—“Have we nothing else to do but to conquer kingdoms for other people?”

let her stand up for it." Thus, with insult added to misery, and great contempt thrown by Napoleon on the friends of liberty all over the world, the fate of Venice was closed. The most remarkable incident of the final transfer to the Austrians was, that the aged Doge Marini dropt down senseless as he was about to take the oath of allegiance to the Imperial commissioner, and died shortly after.

Napoleon Buonaparte had now finished for the present his career of destiny in Italy, which country first saw his rising talents, and was always a subject of peculiar interest to him. He took an affecting leave of the soldiers, who could scarce hope ever to see him replaced by a general of merits so transcendent, and made a moderate and judicious address to the Cisalpine Republic. Finally, he departed, to return through Switzerland to Rastadt, where a congress was sitting for the settlement and pacification of the German empire, and where he was to act as a plenipotentiary on the part of France.

On the journey he was observed to be moody and deeply contemplative. The separation from a hundred thousand men whom he might call his own, and the uncertainty of the future destinies to which he might be summoned, are enough to account for this, without supposing, as some have done, that he already had distinctly formed any of those projects of ambition which Time opened to him. Doubtless, however, his ardent ambition showed him remote and undefined visions of greatness. He could not but be sensible that he returned to the capital of France in a situation which scarce admitted of any mediocrity. He must either be raised to a yet more distinguished height, or altogether broken down, levelled with the mass of subjects, and consigned to comparative obscurity. There was no middle station for the Conqueror and Liberator of Italy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Retrospect.—The Directory—they become unpopular. Causes of their unpopularity—Also at enmity among themselves.—State of public feeling in France—In point of numbers, favourable to the Bourbons; but the Army and monied Interest against them.—Pichegru, head of the Royalists, appointed President of the Council of Five Hundred.—Barbé Marbois, another Royalist, President of the Council of Ancients.—Directory throw themselves upon the succour of Hoche and Buonaparte.—Buonaparte's personal Politics discussed.—Pichegru's Correspondence with the Bourbons—known to Buonaparte—He despatches Augereau to Paris.—Directory arrest their principal Opponents in the Councils on the 18th Fructidor, and banish them to Guiana.—Narrow and impolitic Conduct of the Directory to Buonaparte.—Projected Invasion of England.

WHILE the Conqueror of Italy was pursuing his victories beyond the Alps, the French Directory, in whose name he achieved them, had become, to the conviction of all men, as unlikely to produce the benefits of a settled government, as any of their predecessors vested with the supreme rule.

It is with politics as with mechanics, ingenuity is not always combined with utility. Some one observed to the late celebrated Mr Watt, that it was wonderful for what a number of useless inventions, illustrated by the most ingenious and apparently satisfactory models, patents were yearly issued; he replied, that he had often looked at them with interest, and had found several, the idea of which had occurred to himself in the course of his early studies. "But," said he, with his natural masculine sagacity, "it is one thing to make an ingenious model, and another to contrive an engine which shall work its task. Most of these pretty toys, when they are applied to practical purposes, are found deficient in some point of strength, or correctness of mechanism, which destroys all chance of their ever becoming long or generally useful." Some such imperfection seems to have attended the works of those speculative politicians who framed the various ephemeral constitutions of France. However well they looked upon paper, and however reasonable they sounded to the ear, no one ever thought of them as laws which required veneration and obedience. Did a constitutional rule preclude a favourite measure, to break it down, or leap over it, was the French statesman's unhesitating practice. A rule was always devised applicable to circumstances; and before that, the theory of the constitution was uniformly made to give way.

The constitution of the year Three was not more permanent than those by which it had been preceded. For some time, the Directory, which contained men of considerable talent, conducted themselves with great prudence. The difficulty and danger of their situation served to prevent their separating, as the weight put above an arch keeps the stones in their places. Their exertions in the attempt to redeem the finances, support the war, and re-establish the tranquillity of the country, were attended at first with success. The national factions also sunk before them for a season. They had defeated the aristocratic citizens of Paris on the 13th Vendémiaire; and when the original revolutionists, or democrats, attempted a conspiracy, under the conduct of Gracchus Babeuf, their endeavour to seduce the troops totally failed, and their lives paid the forfeit of their rash attempt to bring back the reign of Terror. Thus, the Directory, or Executive power, under the constitution of the year Three, were for a season triumphant over the internal factions, and, belonging to neither, were in a situation to command both.

But they had few who were really, and on principle, attached to their government, and most endured it only as something better than a new revolutionary

movement, and otherwise in no respect eligible. To have rendered their authority permanent, the Directory must have had great unanimity in their own body, and also brilliant success abroad, and they enjoyed neither one nor the other. The very concoction of their body included the principles of disunion. They were a sort of five kings, retiring from office by rotation, inhabiting each his separate class of apartments in the Luxembourg palace, having each his different establishments, classes of clients, circles of courtiers, flatterers, and instruments. The republican simplicity, of late so essential to a patriot, was laid aside entirely. New costumes of the most splendid kind were devised for the different office-bearers of the state. This change took its rise from the weakness and vanity of Barras, who loved show, and used to go a-hunting with all the formal attendance of a prince. But it was an indulgence of luxury, which gave scandal to both the great parties in the state;—the Republicans, who held it altogether in contempt; and the Royalists, who considered it as an usurpation of the royal dress and appendages.

The finances became continually more and more a subject of uneasiness. In the days of Terror money was easily raised, because it was demanded under pain of death, and assignats were raised to *par* by guillotining those who sold or bought them at less than their full value; but the powerful argument of violence and compulsion being removed, the paper money fell to a ruinous discount, till its depression threatened, unless remedied, altogether to stop the course of public business. It perhaps arose from the difficulty of raising supplies, that the Directory assumed towards other countries a greedy, grasping, and rapacious character, which threw disgrace at once upon the individuals who indulged it, and the state whom they represented. They loaded with exactions the trade of the Batavian republic, whose freedom they had pretended to recognize, and treated with most haughty superiority the ambassadors of independent states. Some of these high officers, and Barras in particular, were supposed accessible to gross corruption, and believed to hold communication with those agents and stock-brokers, who raised money by jobbing in the public funds—a more deservedly unpopular accusation than which can hardly be brought against a minister. It was indeed a great error in the constitution, that though one hundred thousand livres were yearly allowed to each Director while in office, yet he had no subsequent provision after he had retired from his fractional share of sovereignty. This penury, on the part of the public, opened a way to temptation, though of a kind to which mean minds only are obnoxious; and such men as Barras were tempted to make provision for futurity, by availing themselves of present opportunity.

Their five majesties (Sires) of the Luxembourg, as people called them in ridicule, had also their own individual partialities and favourite objects, which led them in turn to tease the French people with unnecessary legislation. La Reveillere-Lepaux was that inconsistent yet not uncommon character, an intolerant philosopher and an enthusiastic deist. He established a priesthood, and hymns and ceremonies for deism; and, taking up the hopeful project of substituting a deistical worship for the Christian faith, just where Robespierre had laid it down, he harassed the nation with laws to oblige them to observe the *decades* of their new calendar as holidays, and to work at their ordinary trades on the Christian Sabbath. At La Reveillere's theory freethinkers laughed, and religious men shuddered; but all were equally annoyed by the legislative measures adopted on a subject so ridiculous as this new ritual of heathenism. Another cause of vexation was the philosophical arrangement of weights and measures upon a new principle, which had in the meantime the inconvenience of introducing doubt and uncertainty into all the arrangements of internal commerce, and deranging entirely such as France continued to hold with countries who were only acquainted with the ordinary standard.

It might have been thought that the distinguished success of the French

arms under the auspices of the Directory would have dazzled the eyes of the French, attached as they have always been to military glory, and blinded them to other less agreeable measures of their government. But the public were well aware, that the most brilliant share of these laurels had been reaped by Buonaparte on his own account; that he had received but slender reinforcements from France (the magnitude of his achievements considered); and that in regard to the instructions of government, much of his success was owing to his departure from them, and following his own course. It was also whispered, that he was an object of suspicion to the Directors, and on his part undervalued their talents, and despised their persons. On the Rhine, again, though nothing could have been more distinguished than the behaviour of the Republican armies, yet their successes had been chequered with many reverses, and, contrasted with the Italian campaigns, lost their impression on the imagination.

While they were thus becoming unpopular in the public opinion, the Directory had the great misfortune to be at enmity among themselves. From the time that Letourneur retired from office in terms of the constitution, and Barthelemy was elected in his stead, there was a majority and an opposition in the Directory, the former consisting of Barras, Rewbel, and La Reveillere—the latter, of Carnot and Barthelemy. Of the two last, Carnot (who had been, it may be remembered, a member of the Committee of Public Safety under Robespierre) was a determined Republican, and Barthelemy a Royalist;—so strangely do revolutionary changes, like the eddies and currents of a swollen river, bring together and sweep down side by side in the same direction, objects the most different and opposed. Barthelemy of course dissented from the majority of the Directors, because secretly and warmly he desired the restoration of the Bourbons, an event which must have been fraught with danger to his colleagues, all of whom had voted for the death of Louis XVI. Carnot also differed from the majority, certainly with no such wish or view; but, his temper being as overbearing as his genius was extensive, he was impatient of opposition, especially in cases where he knew he was acting wisely. He advised strongly, for example, the ratification of the articles of Leoben, instead of placing all which France had acquired, and all which she might lose, on the last fatal cast with an enemy, strong in his very despair, and who might raise large armies, while that of Buonaparte could neither be reinforced nor supported in case of a reverse. Barras's anger on the occasion was so great, that he told Carnot at the council-board, it was to him they owed that infamous treaty of Leoben.

While the Directory were thus disunited among themselves, the nation showed their dissatisfaction openly, and particularly in the two bodies of representatives. The majority indeed of the Council of Elders adhered to the Directory, many of that body belonging to the old republican partisans. But in the more popularly composed Council of Five Hundred, the opposition to the government possessed a great majority, all of whom were decidedly against the Directory, and most of them impressed with the wish of restoring, upon terms previously to be adjusted, the ancient race of legitimate monarchs. This body of persons so thinking, was much increased by the number of emigrants, who obtained, on various grounds, permission to return to their native country after the fall of Robespierre. The forms of civil life began now to be universally renewed; and, as had been the case in France at all times, excepting during the bloody reign of Terror, women of rank, beauty, talent, and accomplishments, began again to resume their places in society, and their saloons or boudoirs were often the scene of deep political discourse, of a sort which in Britain is generally confined to the cabinet, library, or dining-parlour. The wishes of many, or most of these coteries, were in favour of royalty; the same feelings were entertained by the many thousands who saw no possible chance of settling the nation on any other model; and there is little doubt, that had France been permitted at

that moment an uninfluenced choice, the Bourbon family would have been recalled to the throne by the great majority of the French people.

But for reasons mentioned elsewhere, the military were the decided opponents of the Bourbons, and the purchasers of national domains, through every successive sale which might have taken place, were deeply interested against their restoration. Numbers might be on the side of the Royalists; but physical force, and the influence of wealth and of the monied interest, were decidedly against them.

Pichegru might now be regarded as chief of the Royal party. He was an able and successful general, to whom France owed the conquest of Holland. Like La Fayette and Dumouriez, he had been disgusted with the conduct of the Revolution; and like the last of the two generals named, had opened a communication with the Bourbons. He was accused of having suffered his army to be betrayed in a defeat by Clairfait, and the government, in 1796, removed him from the command of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, offering him in exchange the situation of ambassador to Sweden. He declined this species of honourable exile, and, retiring to Franche Comté, continued his correspondence with the Imperial generals. The Royalists expected much from the countenance of a military man of a name so imposing; but we have seen more than once in the course of these Memoirs, that a general without an army is like a hilt without the blade which it should wield and direct.

An opportunity, however, offered Pichegru the means of serving his party in a civil capacity, and that a most important one. The elections of May 1797, made to replace that proportion of the councils which retired by rotation, terminated generally in favour of the Royalists, and served plainly to show on which side the balance of popular feeling now leaned. Pichegru, who had been returned as one of the deputies, was chosen by acclamation President of the Council of Five Hundred, and Barbé Marbois, another Royalist, was elected to the same office by the Council of Ancients, while, as we have already said, Barthelemy, likewise friendly to monarchy, was introduced into the Directory.

These elections were evil signs for the Directory, who did not fail soon to be attacked on every side, and upbraided with the continuance of the war and the financial distresses. Various journals were at the disposal of the party opposed to the majority of the Directors, and hostilities were commenced between the parties, both in the assemblies, where the Royalists had the advantage, and in the public papers, where they were also favourably listened to. The French are of an impatient temper, and could not be long brought to carry on their warfare within the limits assigned by the constitution. Each party, without much regard to the state of the law, looked about for the means of physical force with which they might arm themselves. The Directory, (that is, the majority of that body,) sensible of their unpopularity, and the predominance of the opposite party, which seemed for a time to have succeeded to the boldness and audacity of the Revolutionary class, had, in their agony of extremity, recourse to the army, and threw themselves upon the succour of Hoche and of Buonaparte.

We have elsewhere said, that Buonaparte at this period was esteemed a steady republican. Pichegru believed him to be such when he dissuaded the Royalists from any attempt to gain over the General of Italy; and as he had known him at school at Brienne, declared him of too stubborn a character to afford the least hope of success. Augereau was of the same opinion, and mistook his man so much, that when Madame de Staël asked whether Buonaparte was not inclined to make himself King of Lombardy, he replied with great simplicity, "that he was a young man of too elevated a character." Perhaps Buonaparte himself felt the same for a moment, when, in a despatch to the Directory, he requests their leave to withdraw from the active service of the

Republic, as one who had acquired more glory than was consistent with happiness. "Calumny," he said, "may torment herself in vain with ascribing to me treacherous designs. My civil, like my military career, shall be conforming to republican principles."*

The public papers also, those we mean on the side of the Directory, fell into a sort of rapture on the classical republican feelings by which Buonaparte was actuated, which they said rendered the hope of his return a pleasure pure and unmixed, and precluded the possibility of treachery or engrossing ideas on his side. "The factious of every class," they said, "cannot have an enemy more steady, or the government a friend more faithful, than he who, invested with the military power of which he has made so glorious a use, sighs only to resign a situation so brilliant, prefers happiness to glory, and now that the Republic is graced with triumph and peace, desires for himself only a simple and retired life."

But though such were the ideas then entertained of Buonaparte's truly republican character, framed, doubtless, on the model of Cincinnatus in his classical simplicity, we may be permitted to look a little closer into the ultimate views of him, who was admitted by his enemies and friends, avouched by himself, and sanctioned by the journals, as a pure and disinterested republican; and we think the following changes may be traced.

Whether Buonaparte was ever at heart a real Jacobin even for the moment, may be greatly doubted, whatever mask his situation obliged him to wear. He himself always repelled the charge as an aspersion. His engagement in the affair of the Sections probably determined his opinions as Republican, or rather Thermidorien, at the time, as became him by whom the Republican army had been led and commanded on that day. Besides, at the head of an army zealously republican, even his power over their minds required to be strengthened, for some time at least, by an apparent correspondence in political sentiments betwixt the troops and the general. But in the practical doctrines of government which he recommended to the Italian Republics, his ideas were studiously moderate, and he expressed the strongest fear of, and aversion to, revolutionary doctrines. He recommended the granting equal rights and equal privileges to the nobles, as well as to the indignant vassals and plebeians who had risen against them. In a word, he advocated a free set of institutions, without the intermediate purgatory of a revolution. He was therefore, at this period, far from being a Jacobin.

But though Buonaparte's wishes were thus wisely moderated by practical views, he was not the less likely to be sensible that he was the object of fear, of hatred, and of course of satire and misrepresentation, to that side of the opposed parties in France which favoured royalty. Unhappily for himself, he was peculiarly accessible to every wound of this nature, and, anxiously jealous of his fame, suffered as much under the puny attacks of the journalists, as a noble steer or a gallant horse does amid his rich pasture, under the persecutions of insects, which, in comparison to himself, are not only impotent, but nearly invisible. In several letters to the Directory, he exhibits feelings of this nature which would have been more gracefully concealed, and evinces an irritability against the opposition prints, which we think likely to have increased the zeal with which he came forward on the Republican side at this important crisis.

Another circumstance, which, without determining Buonaparte's conduct, may have operated in increasing his good will to the cause which he embraced, was his having obtained the clew of Pichegru's correspondence with the House of Bourbon. To have concealed this, would have made but a second-rate merit with the exiled family, whose first thanks must have been due to the partisan whom he protected. This was no part for Buonaparte to play; not that we have a right to say he would have accepted the chief character had it been

* *Moniteur*, 1797, No. 224.

offered to him, but his ambition could never have stooped to any inferior place in the drama. In all probability, his ideas fluctuated betwixt the example of Cromwell and of Washington—to be the actual liberator, or the absolute governor of his country.

His particular information respecting Pichegru's secret negotiations, was derived from an incident at the capture of Venice.

When the degenerate Venetians, more under the impulse of vague terror than from any distinct plan, adopted in haste and tumult the measure of totally surrendering their constitution and rights, to be new-modelled by the French general after his pleasure, they were guilty of a gross and aggravated breach of hospitality, in seizing the person and papers of the Comte d'Entraigues,* agent, or envoy, of the exiled Bourbons, who was then residing under their protection. The envoy himself, as Buonaparte alleges, was not peculiarly faithful to his trust; but, besides his information, his portfolio contained many proofs of Pichegru's correspondence with the allied generals, and with the Bourbons, which placed his secret absolutely in the power of the General of Italy, and might help to confirm the line of conduct which he had already meditated to adopt.

Possessed of these documents, and sure that, in addressing a French army of the day, he would swim with the tide if he espoused the side of Republicanism, Buonaparte harangued his troops on the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, in a manner calculated to awaken their ancient democratic enthusiasm. "Soldiers, this is the 14th July! You see before you the names of your companions in arms, dead in the field of honour for the liberty of their country. They have set you an example, that you owe your lives to thirty millions of Frenchmen, and to the national name, which has received new splendour from your victories. Soldiers, I am aware you are deeply affected by the dangers which threaten the country. But she can be subjected to none which are real. The same men who made France triumph over united Europe, still live—Mountains separate us from France, but you would traverse them with the speed of eagles, were it necessary, to maintain the constitution, defend liberty, protect the government and the Republicans. Soldiers, the government watches over the laws as a sacred deposit committed to them. The Royalists shall no longer show themselves but what they shall cease to exist. Be without uncasiness, and let us swear by the manes of those heroes who have died by our sides for liberty—let us swear, too, on our standards—War to the enemies of the Republic, and to the Constitution of the year Three!"

It is needless to remark, that, under the British constitution, or any other existing on fixed principles, the haranguing an armed body of soldiers, with the purpose of inducing them to interfere by force in any constitutional question, would be in one point of view mutiny, in another high treason.

The hint so distinctly given by the general, was immediately adopted by the troops. Deep called to deep, and each division of the army, whatever its denomination, poured forth its menaces of military force and compulsion against the opposition party in the Councils, who held opinions different from those of their military chief, but which they had, at least hitherto, only expressed and supported by those means of resistance which the constitution placed in their power. In other words, the soldiers' idea of a republic was, that the sword was to decide the constitutional debates, which give so much trouble to ministers in

* This gentleman was one of the second emigration, who left France during Robespierre's ascendancy. He was employed as a political agent by the Court of Russia, after the affair of Venice, which proves that he was not at least convicted of treachery to the Bourbon princes. In July 1812, he was assassinated at his villa at Hackney, near London, by an Italian domestic, who, having murdered both the Count and Countess, shot himself through the head, leaving no clew to discover the motive of his villainy. It was remarked that the villain used Count d'Entraigues' own pistols and dagger, which, apprehensive of danger as a political intriguer, he had always ready prepared in his apartment.

a mixed or settled government. The Pretorian bands, the Strelitzes, the Janissaries, have all in their turn entertained this primitive and simple idea of reforming abuses in a state, and changing, by the application of military force, an unpopular dynasty, or an obnoxious ministry.

It was not by distant menaces alone that Buonaparte served the Directory at this important crisis. He despatched Augereau to Paris, ostensibly for the purpose of presenting the standards taken at Mantua, but in reality to command the armed force which the majority of the Directory had determined to employ against their dissentient colleagues, and the opponents of their measures in the national councils. Augereau was a blunt, bold, stupid soldier, a devoted Jacobin, whose principles were sufficiently well known to warrant his standing upon no constitutional delicacies. But in case the Directory failed, Buonaparte kept himself in readiness to march instantly to Lyons at the head of fifteen thousand men. There rallying the Republicans, and all who were attached to the Revolution, he would, according to his own well-chosen expression, like Cæsar, have crossed the Rubicon at the head of the popular party—and ended, doubtless, like Cæsar, by himself usurping the supreme command, which he pretended to assert in behalf of the people.

But Buonaparte's presence was not so essentially necessary to the support of the Directory as he might have expected, or as he perhaps hoped. They had military aid nearer at hand. Disregarding a fundamental law of the Constitution, which declared that armed troops should not be brought within a certain distance of the Legislative Bodies, they moved towards Paris a part of General Hoche's army. The majority of the Councils becoming alarmed, prepared means of defence by summoning the National Guards to arms. But Augereau allowed them no time. He marched to their place of meeting, at the head of a considerable armed force. The guards stationed for their protection, surprised or faithless, offered no resistance; and, proceeding as men possessed of the superior strength, the Directory treated their political opponents as state prisoners, arrested Barthelemy, (Carnot having fled to Geneva,) and made prisoners, in the Hall of the Assembly and elsewhere, Willot, President of the Council of Ancients, Pichegru, President of that of the Five Hundred, and above one hundred and fifty deputies, journalists, and other public characters. As an excuse for these arbitrary and illegal proceedings, the Directory made public the intercepted correspondence of Pichegru; although few of the others involved in the same accusation were in the secret of the Royalist conspiracy. Indeed, though all who desired an absolute repose from the revolutionary altercations which tore the country to pieces, began to look that way, he must have been a violent partisan of royalty indeed, that could have approved of the conduct of a general, who, like Pichegru, commanding an army, had made it his business to sacrifice his troops to the sword of the enemy, by disappointing and deranging those plans which it was his duty to have carried into effect.

Few would at first believe Pichegru's breach of faith; but it was suddenly confirmed by a proclamation of Moreau, who, in the course of the war, had intercepted a baggage waggon belonging to the Austrian general Klinglin, and became possessed of the whole secret correspondence, which, nevertheless, he had never mentioned, until it came out by the seizure of the Comte D'Entraigues' portfolio. Then, indeed, fearing perhaps the consequences of having been so long silent, Moreau published what he knew. Regnier had observed the same suspicious silence; which seems to infer, that if these generals did not precisely favour the royal cause, they were not disposed to be active in detecting the conspiracies formed in its behalf.

The Directory made a tyrannical use of the power which they obtained by their victory of the 18th Fructidor, as this epoch was called. They spilt, indeed, no blood, but otherwise their measures against the defeated party were of

the most illegal and oppressive character. A law, passed in the heat of animosity, condemned two directors, fifty deputies, and an hundred and forty-eight individuals of different classes (most of whom were persons of some character and influence), to be transported to the scorching and unhealthy deserts of Guiana, which, to many, was a sentence of lingering but certain death. They were barbarously treated, both on the passage to that dreadful place, and after they arrived there. It was a singular part of their fate, that they found several of the fiercest of their ancient enemies, the Jacobins, still cursing God and defying man, in the same land of wretchedness and exile.

Besides these severities, various elections were arbitrarily dissolved, and other strong measures of public safety, as they were called, adopted, to render the power of the Directory more indisputable. During this whole revolution, the lower portion of the population, which used to be so much agitated upon like occasions, remained perfectly quiet; the struggle lay exclusively between the middle classes, who inclined to a government on the basis of royalty, and the Directory, who, without having any very tangible class of political principles, had become possessed of the supreme power, desired to retain it, and made their point good by the assistance of the military.

Buonaparte was much disappointed at the result of the 18th Fructidor, chiefly because, if less decisive, it would have added more to his consequence, and have given him an opportunity of crossing, as he termed it, the Rubicon. As it was, the majority of the Directors,—three men of no particular talent, undistinguished alike by birth, by services to their country, or even by accidental popularity, and cast, as it were by chance, upon supreme power,—remained by the issue of the struggle still the masters of the bold and ambitious conqueror, who probably already felt his own vocation to be for command rather than obedience.

Napoleon appears by his Memoirs to have regretted the violence with which the victorious Directors prosecuted their personal revenge, which involved many for whom he had respect. He declares his own idea of punishment would have gone no farther than imprisoning some of the most dangerous conspirators, and placing others under the watchful superintendence of the police. He must have taken some painful interest in the fate of Carnot in particular, whom he seems to have regarded as one of his most effective patrons.* Indeed, it is said that he was so much displeased with the Directory even prior to the 18th Fructidor, that he refused to remit a sum of money with which he had promised to aid them for the purpose of forwarding that event. Barras' secretary was sent to task him with this contumacy; which he did so unceremoniously, that the general, unused to contradiction, was about to order this agent to be shot; but, on consideration, put him off with some insignificant reply.

It followed, from the doubtful terms on which Buonaparte stood with the Directory, that they must have viewed his return to Paris with some apprehension, when they considered the impression likely to be made on any capital, but especially on that of Paris, by the appearance there of one who seemed to be the chosen favourite of Fortune, and to deserve her favours by the use which he made of them. The mediocrity of such men as Barras never gives them so much embarrassment, as when, being raised to an elevation above their desert, they find themselves placed in comparison with one to whom nature has given the talents which their situation requires in themselves. The higher their condition, their demeanour is the more awkward; for the factitious advantages which they possess cannot raise them to the natural dignity of character, unless in the sense in which a dwarf, by the assistance of crutches, may be said to be as tall

* In Carnot's Memoirs, the merit of discovering Buonaparte's talents and taking care of his promotion, is attributed to Carnot, rather than to Barras. However this may be, it is certain that Napoleon acknowledged great obligations to Carnot, and protested to him perpetual gratitude.—See *Moniteur*, l'an 5, No. 140.

as a giant. The Directory had already found Buonaparte, on several occasions, a spirit of the sort which would not be commanded. Undoubtedly they would have been well pleased had it been possible to have found him employment at a distance; but as that seemed difficult, they were obliged to look round for the means of employing him at home, or abide the tremendous risk of his finding occupation for himself.

It is surprising that it did not occur to the Directory to make at least the attempt of conciliating Buonaparte, by providing for his future fortune largely and liberally, at the expence of the public. He deserved that attention to his private affairs, for he had himself entirely neglected them. While he drew from the dominions which he conquered or overawed in Italy, immense sums in behalf of the French nation, which he applied in part to the support of the army, and in part remitted to the Directory, he kept no accounts, nor were any demanded of him; but according to his own account, he transmitted fifty millions of francs to Paris, and had not remaining of his own funds, when he returned from Italy, more than three hundred thousand.

It is no doubt true, that, to raise these sums, Buonaparte had pillaged the old states, thus selling to the newly-formed commonwealths their liberty and equality at a very handsome rate, and probably leaving them in very little danger of corruption from that wealth which is said to be the bane of republican virtue. But on the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that if the French general plundered the Italians as Cortez did the Mexicans, he did not reserve any considerable share of the spoil for his own use, though the opportunity was often in his power.

The commissary Salicetti, his countryman, recommended a less scrupulous line of conduct. Soon after the first successes in Italy, he acquainted Napoleon that the Chevalier d'Este, the Duke of Modena's brother and envoy, had four millions of francs, in gold, contained in four chests, prepared for his acceptance. "The Directory and the Legislative Bodies will never," he said, "acknowledge your services—your circumstances require the money, and the Duke will gain a protector."

"I thank you," said Buonaparte; "but I will not for four millions place myself in the power of the Duke of Modena."

The Venetians, in the last agony of their terrors, offered the French general a present of seven millions, which was refused in the same manner. Austria also had made her proffers; and they were nothing less than a principality in the empire, to be established in Napoleon's favour, consisting of two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants at least, a provision which would have put him out of danger of suffering by the proverbial ingratitude of a republic. The general transmitted his thanks to the Emperor for this proof of the interest which he took in his fortune, but added, he could accept of no wealth or preferment which did not proceed from the French people, and that he should be always satisfied with the amount of revenue which they might be disposed to afford him.

But, however free from the wish to obtain wealth by any indirect means, Napoleon appears to have expected, that in return for public services of such unusual magnitude, some provision ought to have been made for him. An attempt was made to procure a public grant of the domain of Chambord, and a large hotel in Paris, as an acknowledgment of the national gratitude for his brilliant successes; but the Directory thwarted the proposal.

The proposition respecting Chambord was not the only one of the kind. Mahibran, a member of the Council of Five Hundred, made a motion that Buonaparte should be endowed with a revenue, at the public charge, of fifty thousand livres annually, with a reversion to his wife of one half of that sum. It may be supposed that this motion had not been sufficiently considered and preconcerted, since it was very indifferently received, and was evaded by the swaggering declaration of a member, that such glorious deeds could not be

rewarded by gold. So that the Assembly adopted the reasonable principle, that because the debt of gratitude was too great to be paid in money, therefore he to whom it was due was to be suffered to remain in comparative indigence—an economical mode of calculation, and not unlike that high-sounding doctrine of the civil law, which states, that a free man being seized on, and forcibly sold for a slave, shall obtain no damages on that account, because the liberty of a citizen is too transcendently valuable to be put to estimation.

Whatever might be the motives of the Directory; whether they hoped that poverty might depress Buonaparte's ambition, render him more dependant on the government, and oblige him to remain in a private condition for want of means to put himself at the head of a party; or whether they acted with the indistinct and confused motives of little minds, who wish to injure those whom they fear, their conduct was alike ungracious and impolitic. They ought to have calculated, that a generous mind would have been attached by benefits, and that a selfish one might have been deterred from more doubtful and ambitious projects, by a prospect of sure and direct advantage; but that marked ill-will and distrust must in every case render him dangerous, who has the power to be so.

Their plan, instead of resting on an attempt to conciliate the ambitious conqueror, and soothe him to the repose of a tranquil indulgence of independence and ease, seems to have been that of devising for him new labours, like the wife of Eurystheus for the juvenile Hercules. If he succeeded, they may have privately counted upon securing the advantages for themselves; if he failed, they were rid of a troublesome rival in the race of power and popularity. It was with these views that they proposed to Napoleon to crown his military glories, by assuming the command of the preparations made for the conquest of England.

CHAPTER XXVIII

View of the respective Situations of Great Britain and France, at the Period of Napoleon's return from Italy.—Negotiations at Lisle—Broken off, and Lord Malmesbury ordered to quit the Republic.—Army of England decreed, and Buonaparte named to the Command—He takes up his Residence in Paris—Description of his personal Character and Manners.—Madame de Stael.—Public Honours paid to Napoleon.—Project of Invasion terminated, and the real Views of the Directory discovered to be the Expedition to Egypt.—Armies of Italy and the Rhine, compared and contrasted.—Napoleon's Views and Notions in heading the Egyptian Expedition—those of the Directory regarding it—Its actual Impolicy.—Curious Statement regarding Buonaparte, previous to his Departure, given by Miot.—The Armament sails from Toulon, on 10th May 1798.—Napoleon occupies Malta, without resistance, on 10th June—Proceeds on his course, and, escaping the British Squadron, lands at Alexandria on the 29th.—Description of the various Classes of Nations who inhabit Egypt:—1. The Fellahs and Bedouins—2. The Copts—3. The Mamelukes.—Napoleon issues a Proclamation from Alexandria, against the Mamelukes—Marches against them on the 5th July.—Mameluke mode of fighting.—Discontent and disappointment of the French Troops and their Commanders—Arrive at Cairo.—Battle of the Pyramids on 11th of July, in which the Mamelukes were completely defeated and dispersed.—Cairo surrenders.

It might have been thought, such was the success of the French arms on the land, and of the British upon the sea, that the war must now be near its natural and unavoidable termination, like a fire when there no longer remain any com-

bustibles to be devoured. Wherever water could bear them, the British vessels of war had swept the seas of the enemy. The greater part of the foreign colonies belonging to France and her allies, among whom she now numbered Holland and Spain, were in the possession of the English, nor had France a chance of recovering them. On the contrary, not a musket was seen pointed against France on the continent; so that it seemed as if the great rival nations, fighting with different weapons and on different elements, must at length give up a contest, in which it was almost impossible to come to a decisive struggle.

An attempt accordingly was made, by the negotiation of Lisle, to bring to a period the war, which appeared now to subsist entirely without an object. Lord Malmesbury, on that occasion, gave in, on the part of Britain, an offer to surrender all the conquests she had made from France and her allies; on condition of the cession of Trinidad, on the part of Spain, and of the Cape of Good Hope, Cochin, and Ceylon, on the part of Holland, with some stipulations in favour of the Prince of Orange and his adherents in the Netherlands. The French commissioners, in reply, declared, that their instructions required that the English should make a complete cession of their conquests, without any equivalent whatsoever; and they insisted, as indispensable preliminaries, that the King of Great Britain should lay aside his titular designation of King of France—that the Toulon fleet should be restored—and that the English should renounce their right to certain mortgages over the Netherlands, for money lent to the Emperor. Lord Malmesbury, of course, rejected a sweeping set of propositions, which decided every question against England even before the negotiation commenced, and solicited the French to offer some modified form of treaty. The 18th Fructidor, however, had in the interim taken place, and the Republican party, being in possession of complete authority, broke off the negotiation, if it could be called such, abruptly, and ordered the English ambassador out of the dominions of the Republic with very little ceremony. It was now proclaimed generally, that the existence of the English Carthage in the neighbourhood of the French Rome was altogether inadmissible; that England must be subdued once more, as in the times of William the Conqueror; and the hopes of a complete and final victory over their natural rival and enemy, as the two nations are but overapt to esteem each other, presented so flattering a prospect, that there was scarce a party in France, not even amongst the Royalists, which did not enter on what was expected to prove the decisive contest, with the revival of all those feelings of bitter animosity that had distinguished past ages.

Towards the end of October 1797, the Directory announced that there should be instantly assembled on the shores of the ocean an army, to be called the Army of England, and that the Citizen-General Buonaparte was named to the command. The intelligence was received in every part of France with all the triumph which attends the anticipation of certain victory. The address of the Directory numbered all the conquests which France had won, and the efforts she had made, and prepared the French nation to expect the fruit of so many victories and sacrifices when they had punished England for her perfidy and maritime tyranny. "It is at London where the misfortunes of all Europe are forged and manufactured—It is in London that they must be terminated." In a solemn meeting held by the Directory, for the purpose of receiving the treaty of peace with Austria, which was presented to them by Berthier and Mougé on the part of Buonaparte, the latter, who had been one of the commissioners for pillaging Italy of her pictures and statues, and who looked, doubtless, to a new harvest of rarities in England, accepted, on the part of the army and general, the task imposed by the French rulers. "The government of England and the French Republic cannot both continue to exist—you have given the word which shall fall—already our victorious troops brandish their arms, and Scipio is at their head."

While this farce, for such it proved, was acting in Paris, the Chief of the intended enterprise arrived there, and took up his abode in the same modest house which he had occupied before becoming the conqueror of palaces. The community of Paris, with much elegance, paid their successful general the compliment of changing the name of the street from Rue Chanteraine to Rue des Victoires.

In a metropolis where all is welcome that can vary the tedium of ordinary life, the arrival of any remarkable person is a species of holiday; but such an eminent character as Buonaparte—the conqueror—the sage—the politician—the undaunted braver of every difficulty—the invincible victor in every battle—who had carried the banners of the Republic from Genoa till their approach scared the Pontiff in Rome, and the Emperor in Vienna, was no everyday wonder. His youth, too, added to the marvel, and still more the claim of general superiority over the society in which he mingled, though consisting of the most distinguished persons in France; a superiority cloaking itself with a species of reserve, which inferred, “You may look upon me, but you cannot penetrate or see through me.” Napoleon’s general manner in society, during this part of his life, has been described by an observer of first-rate power; according to whom, he was one for whom the admiration which could not be refused to him, was always mingled with a portion of fear. He was different in his manner from other men, and neither pleased nor angry, kind nor severe, after the common fashion of humanity. He appeared to live for the execution of his own plans, and to consider others only in so far as they were connected with, and could advance or oppose them. He estimated his fellow-mortals no otherwise than as they could be useful to his views; and, with a precision of intelligence which seemed intuitive from its rapidity, he penetrated the sentiments of those whom it was worth his while to study. Buonaparte did not then possess the ordinary tone of light conversation in society; probably his mind was too much burthened or too proud to stoop to adopt that mode of pleasing, and there was a stiffness and reserve of manner, which was perhaps adopted for the purpose of keeping people at a distance. His look had the same character. When he thought himself closely observed, he had the power of discharging from his countenance all expression, save that of a vague and indefinite smile, and presenting to the curious investigator the fixed eyes and rigid features of a bust of marble.

When he talked with the purpose of pleasing, Buonaparte often told anecdotes of his life in a very pleasing manner; when silent, he had something disdainful in the expression of his face; when disposed to be quite at ease, he was, in Madame de Stael’s opinion, rather vulgar. His natural tone of feeling seemed to be a sense of internal superiority, and of secret contempt for the world in which he lived, the men with whom he acted, and even the very objects which he pursued. His character and manners were upon the whole strongly calculated to attract the attention of the French nation, and to excite a perpetual interest even from the very mystery which attached to him, as well as from the splendour of his triumphs. The supreme power was residing in the Luxembourg ostensibly; but Paris was aware, that the means which had raised, and which must support and extend that power, were to be found in the humble mansion of the newly-christened Rue des Victoires.

Some of these features are perhaps harshly designed, as being drawn *recensibus odiis*. The disagreement between Buonaparte and Madame de Stael, from whom we have chiefly described them, is well known. It originated about this time, when, as a first-rate woman of talent, she was naturally desirous to attract the notice of the Victor of Victors. They appear to have misunderstood each other; for the lady, who ought certainly to know best, has informed us, “that far from feeling her fear of Buonaparte removed by repeated meetings, it seemed to increase, and his best exertions to please could not overcome her

invincible aversion for what she found in his character." His ironical contempt of excellence of every kind, operated like the sword in romance, which froze while it wounded. Buonaparte seems never to have suspected the secret and mysterious terror with which he impressed the ingenious author of *Corinne*; on the contrary, Las Casas tells us that she combined all her efforts, and all her means, to make an impression on the general. She wrote to him when distant, and, as the Count ungallantly expresses it, tormented him when present. In truth, to use an established French phrase, they stood in a false position with respect to each other. Madame de Stael might be pardoned for thinking that it would be difficult to resist her wit and her talent, when exerted with the purpose of pleasing; but Buonaparte was disposed to repel, rather than encourage the advances of one whose views were so shrewd, and her observation so keen, while her sex permitted her to push her inquiries farther than one man might have dared to do in conversing with another. She certainly did desire to look into him "with considerate eyes," and on one occasion put his abilities to the proof, by asking him rather abruptly, in the middle of a brilliant party at Talleyrand's, "Whom he esteemed the greatest woman in the world, alive or dead?"—"Her, madam, that has borne the most children," answered Buonaparte, with much appearance of simplicity. Disconcerted by the reply, she observed, that he was reported not to be a great admirer of the fair sex. "I am very fond of my wife, madam," he replied, with one of those brief and yet piquant observations, which adjourned a debate as promptly as one of his characteristic manœuvres would have ended a battle. From this period there was enmity between Buonaparte and Madame de Stael; and at different times he treated her with a harshness which had some appearance of actual personal dislike, though perhaps rather directed against the female politician than the woman of literature. After his fall, Madame de Stael relented in her resentment to him; and we remember her, during the campaign of 1814, presaging in society how the walls of Troyes were to see a second invasion and defeat of the Huns, as had taken place in the days of Attalia, while the French Emperor was to enact the second Theodorick.

In the meantime, while popular feeling and the approbation of distinguished genius were thus seeking to pay court to the youthful conqueror, the Directory found themselves obliged to render to him that semblance of homage which could not have been withheld without giving much offence to general opinion, and injuring those who omitted to pay it, much more than him who was entitled by the unanimous voice to receive it. On the 10th of December, the Directory received Buonaparte in public, with honours which the Republican government had not yet conferred on any subject, and which must have seemed incongruous to those who had any recollection of the liberty and equality, once so emphatically pronounced to be the talisman of French prosperity. The ceremony took place in the great court of the Luxembourg palace, where the Directory, surrounded by all that was officially important or distinguished by talent, received from Buonaparte's hand the confirmed treaty of Campo Formio. The delivery of this document was accompanied by a speech from Buonaparte, in which he told the Directory, that, in order to establish a constitution founded on reason, it was necessary that eighteen centuries of prejudices should be conquered—"The constitution of the year THREE, and you, have triumphed over all these obstacles." The triumph lasted exactly until the year EIGHT, when the orator himself overthrew the constitution, destroyed the power of the rulers who had overcome the prejudices of eighteen centuries, and reigned in their stead.

The French, who had banished religion from their thoughts, and from their system of domestic policy, yet usually preserved some perverted ceremony connected with it, on public solemnities. They had disused the exercises of devotion, and expressly disowned the existence of an object of worship; yet they could not do without altars, and hymns, and rites, upon such occasions as the

present. The General, conducted by Barras, the President of the Directory, approached an erection, termed the Altar of the Country, where they went through various appropriate ceremonies, and at length dismissed a numerous assembly, much edified with what they had seen. The two Councils, or Representative Bodies, also gave a splendid banquet in honour of Buonaparte. And what he appeared to receive with more particular satisfaction than these marks of distinction, the Institute admitted him a member of its body in the room of his friend Carnot (who was actually a fugitive, and believed at the time to be dead), while the poet Chenier promulgated his praises, and foretold his future triumphs, and his approaching conquest of England.

There is nothing less philosophical than to attach ridicule to the customs of other nations, merely because they differ from those of our own; yet it marks the difference between England and her continental neighbour, that the two Houses of Parliament never thought of giving a dinner to Marlborough, nor did the Royal Society choose his successor in the path of victory a member by acclamation; although the British nation in either case acquitted themselves of the debt of gratitude which they owed their illustrious generals, in the humbler and more vulgar mode of conferring on both large and princely domains.

Meantime the threat of invasion was maintained with unabated earnestness. But it made no impression on the British, or rather it stimulated men of all ranks to bury temporary and party dissensions about politics, and bend themselves, with the whole energy of their national character, to confront and resist the preparations made against them. Their determination was animated by recollections of their own traditional gallantry, which had so often inflicted the deepest wounds upon France, and was not now likely to give up to anything short of the most dire necessity. The benefits were then seen of a free constitution, which permits the venom of party-spirit to evaporate in open debate. Those who had differed on the question of peace or war, were unanimous in that of national defence, and resistance to the common enemy; and those who appeared in the vulgar eye engaged in unappeasable contention, were the most eager to unite themselves together for these purposes, as men employed in fencing would throw down the foils and draw their united swords, if disturbed by the approach of robbers.

Buonaparte in the meanwhile made a complete survey of the coast of the British channel, pausing at each remarkable point, and making those remarks and calculations which induced him to adopt at an after period the renewal of the project for a descent upon England. The result of his observations decided his opinion, that in the present case the undertaking ought to be abandoned. The immense preparations and violent threats of invasion were carried into no more serious effect than the landing of about twelve or fourteen hundred Frenchmen, under a General Tate, at Fishguard, in South Wales. They were without artillery, and behaved rather like men whom a shipwreck had cast on a hostile shore, than like an invading enemy, as they gave themselves up as prisoners without even a show of defence to Lord Cawdor, who had marched against them at the head of a body of the Welsh militia, hastily drawn together on the alarm. The measure was probably only to be considered as experimental, and as such must have been regarded as an entire failure.

The demonstrations of invasion, however, were ostensibly continued, and everything seemed arranged on either side for a desperate collision betwixt the two most powerful nations in Europe. But the proceedings of politicians resemble those of the Indian traders called Banians, who seem engaged in talking about ordinary and trifling affairs, while, with their hands concealed beneath a shawl that is spread between them, they are secretly debating and adjusting, by signs, bargains of the utmost importance. While all France and England had their eyes fixed on the fleets and armies destined against the latter country, the

Directory and their general had no intention of using these preparations, except as a blind to cover their real object, which was the celebrated expedition to Egypt.

While yet in Italy, Buonaparte had suggested to the Directory (13th September 1797) the advantage which might be derived from seizing upon Malta, which he represented as an easy prize. The knights, he said, were odious to the Maltese inhabitants, and were almost starving; to augment which state of distress, and increase that incapacity of defence, he had already confiscated their Italian property. He then proceeded to intimate, that being possessed of Corfu and Malta, it was natural to take possession of Egypt. Twenty-five thousand men, with eight or ten ships of the line, would be sufficient for the expedition, which he suggested might depart from the coasts of Italy.

Talleyrand, then minister for foreign affairs, (in his answer of 23d September,) saw the utmost advantage in the design upon Egypt, which, as a colony, would attract the commerce of India to Europe, in preference to the circuitous route by the Cape of Good Hope. This correspondence proves that even before Buonaparte left Italy, he had conceived the idea of the Egyptian expedition, though probably only as one of the vast and vague schemes of ambition which success in so many perilous enterprises had tended to foster. There was something of wild grandeur in the idea, calculated to please an ambitious imagination. He was to be placed far beyond the reach of any command superior to his own, and left at his own discretion to the extending conquests, and perhaps founding an empire, in a country long considered as the cradle of knowledge, and celebrated in sacred and profane history as having been the scene of ancient events and distant revolutions, which, through the remoteness of ages, possess a gloomy and mysterious effect on the fancy. The first specimens of early art also were to be found among the gigantic ruins of Egypt, and its time-defying monuments of antiquity. This had its effect upon Buonaparte, who affected so particularly the species of fame which attaches to the protector and extender of science, philosophy, and the fine arts. On this subject he had a ready and willing counsellor at hand. Mongé, the artist and virtuoso, was Buonaparte's confidant on this occasion, and there is no doubt encouraged him to an undertaking which promised a rich harvest to the antiquarian, among the ruins of temples and palaces, hitherto imperfectly examined.

But although the subject was mentioned betwixt the Directory and their ministers and Buonaparte, yet before adopting the course which the project opened, the general was probably determined to see the issue of the revolution of the 18th Fructidor; doubting, not unreasonably, whether the conquerors in that struggle could so far avail themselves of the victory which they had obtained over the majority of the National Representatives, as to consolidate and establish on a firm foundation their own authority. He knew the Directory themselves were popular with none. The numerous party, who were now inclined to a monarchical government, regarded them with horror. The army, though supporting them rather than coalesce with the Royalists, despised and disliked them; the violent Republicans remembered their active share in Robespierre's downfall, and the condemnations which followed the detected conspiracy of Babeuf, and were in no respect better disposed to their domination. Thus despised by the army, dreaded by the Royalists, and detested by the Republicans, the Directorial government appeared to remain standing, only because the factions to whom it was unacceptable were afraid of each other's attaining a superiority in the struggle, which must attend its downfall.

This crisis of public affairs was a tempting opportunity for such a character as Buonaparte, whose almost incredible successes, unvaried by a single reverse which deserved that name, naturally fixed the eyes of the multitude, and indeed of the nation at large, upon him, as upon one who seemed destined to play the

most distinguished part in any of those new changes, which the mutable state of the French government seemed rapidly preparing.

The people, naturally partial to a victor, followed him everywhere with acclamations, and his soldiers, in their camp-songs, spoke of pulling the *attorneys* out of the seat of government, and installing their victorious general. Even already, for the first time since the commencement of the Revolution, the French, losing their recent habits of thinking and speaking of the nation as a body, began to interest themselves in Napoleon as an individual; and that exclusive esteem of his person had already taken root in the public mind, which afterwards formed the foundation of his throne.

Yet, in spite of these promising appearances, Napoleon, cautious as well as enterprising, saw that the time was not arrived when he could, without great risk, attempt to possess himself of the supreme government in France. The soldiers of Italy were indeed at his devotion, but there was another great and rival army belonging to the Republic, that of the Rhine, which had never been under his command, never had partaken his triumphs, and which naturally looked rather to Moreau than to Buonaparte as their general and hero.

Madame de Stael describes the soldiers from these two armies, as resembling each other in nothing save the valour which was common to both. The troops of the Rhine, returning from hard-fought fields, which, if followed by victory, had afforded but little plunder, exhibited still the severe simplicity which had been affected under the republican model; whereas the army of Italy had reaped richer spoils than barren laurels alone, and made a display of wealth and enjoyment which showed they had not neglected their own interest while advancing the banners of France.

It was not likely, while such an army as that of the Rhine existed, opposed by rivalry and the jealousy of fame to the troops of Buonaparte, that the latter should have succeeded in placing himself at the head of affairs. Besides, the forces on which he could depend were distant. Fortune had not afforded him the necessary pretext for crossing, as he termed it, the Rubicon, and bringing twenty thousand men to Lyons. Moreau, Jourdan, Kleber, had all high reputations, scarce inferior to his own; and the troops who had served under them were disposed to elevate them even to an equality with the Conqueror of Italy. Buonaparte also knew that his popularity, though great, was not universal. He was disliked by the middle classes, from recollection of his commanding during the affair of the Sections of Paris; and many of the Republicans exclaimed against him for his surrendering Venice to the Austrians. In a word, he was too much肘ed and incommoded by others to permit his taking with full vigour the perilous spring necessary to place him in the seat of supreme authority, though there were not wanting those who would fain have persuaded him to venture on a course so daring. To such counsellors he answered, that "*the fruit was not ripe*,"—a hint which implied that appetite was not wanting, though prudence forbade the banquet.

Laying aside, therefore, the character of General of the Army of England, and adjourning to a future day the conquest of that hostile island; silencing at the same time the internal wishes and the exterior temptations which urged him to seize the supreme power, which seemed escaping from those who held it, Napoleon turned his eyes and thoughts eastward, and meditated in the distant countries of the rising sun, a scene worthy his talents, his military skill, and his ambition.

The Directory, on the other hand, eager to rid themselves of his perilous vicinity, hastened to accomplish the means of his expedition to Egypt, upon a scale far more formidable than any which had yet sailed from modern Europe, for the invasion and subjection of distant and peaceful realms.

It was soon whispered abroad that the invasion of England was to be post-

poned; until the Conqueror of Italy, having attained a great and national object, by the success of a secret expedition fitted out on a scale of stupendous magnitude, should be at leisure to resume the conquest of Britain.

But Buonaparte did not limit his views to those of armed conquest; he meant that these should be softened by mingling with them schemes of a literary and scientific character, as if he had desired, as some one said, that Minerva should march at the head of his expedition, holding in one hand her dreadful lance, and with the other introducing the sciences and the muses. The various treasures of art which had been transferred to the capital by the influence of his arms, gave the general of the Italian army a right to such distinctions as the French men of literature could confer; and he was himself possessed of deep scientific knowledge as a mathematician. He became apparently much attached to learned pursuits, and wore the uniform of the Institute on all occasions when he was out of military costume. This affectation of uniting the encouragement of letters and science with his military tactics, led to a new and peculiar branch of the intended expedition.

The public observed with astonishment a detachment of no less than one hundred men, who had cultivated the arts and sciences, or, to use the French phrase, *savants*, selected for the purpose of joining this mysterious expedition, of which the object still remained a secret; while all classes of people asked each other what new quarter of the world France had determined to colonize, since she seemed preparing at once to subdue it by her arms, and to enrich it with the treasures of her science and literature. This singular department of the expedition, the first of the kind which ever accompanied an invading army, was liberally supplied with books, philosophical instruments, and all means of prosecuting the several departments of knowledge.

Buonaparte did not, however, trust to the superiority of science to ensure the conquest of Egypt. He was fully provided with more effectual means. The land forces belonging to the expedition were of the most formidable description. Twenty-five thousand men, chiefly veterans selected from his own Italian army, had in their list of generals subordinate to Buonaparte the names of Kleber, Dessaix, Berthier, Regnier, Murat, Lannes, Andreossi, Menou, Belliard, and others well known in the revolutionary wars. Four hundred transports were assembled for the conveyance of the troops. Thirteen ships of the line, and four frigates, commanded by Admiral Brueyes, an experienced and gallant officer, formed the escort of the expedition; a finer and more formidable one than which never sailed on so bold an adventure.

We have already touched upon the secret objects of this armament. The Directory were desirous to be rid of Buonaparte, who might become a dangerous competitor in the present unsettled state of the French government. Buonaparte, on his side, accepted the command, because it opened a scene of conquest worthy of his ambition. A separate and uncontrolled command over so gallant an army seemed to promise him the conquest and the sovereignty, not of Egypt only, but of Syria, Turkey, perhaps Constantinople, the Queen of the East; and he himself afterwards more than hinted, that but for controlling circumstances, he would have bent his whole mind to the establishment of an oriental dynasty, and left France to her own destinies. When a subaltern officer of artillery, he had nourished the hope of being King of Jerusalem. In his present situation of dignity and strength, the sovereignty of an Emperor of the universal East, or of a Caliph of Egypt at the least, was a more commensurate object of ambition.

The private motives of the government and of the general are therefore easily estimated. But it is not so easy to justify the Egyptian expedition upon any views of sound national policy. On the contrary, the object to be gained by so much risk, and at the same time by an act of aggression upon the Ottoman Porte, the ancient ally of France, to whom Egypt belonged, was of very doubtful utility.

The immense fertility of the alluvial provinces irrigated by the Nile, no doubt renders their sovereignty a matter of great consequence to the Turkish empire, which, from the oppressed state of their agriculture everywhere, and from the rocky and barren character of their Grecian provinces, are not in a condition to supply the capital with grain, did they not draw it from that never-failing land. But France herself, fully supplied from her own resources, had no occasion to send her best general, and hazard her veteran army, for the purpose of seizing a distant province, merely to facilitate her means of feeding her population. To erect that large country into a French colony, would have required a drain of population, of expense, and of supplies of all sorts, which France, just recovering from the convulsion of her Revolution, was by no means fit to encounter. The climate, too, is insalubrious to strangers, and must have been a constant cause of loss, until, in process of time, the colonists had become habituated to its peculiarities. It is farther to be considered, that the most perfect and absolute success in the undertaking, must have ended, not in giving a province to the French Republic, but a separate and independent kingdom to her victorious and ambitious general. Buonaparte had paid but slight attention to the commands of the Directory when in Italy. Had he realized his proposed conquests in the east, they would have been sent over the Mediterranean altogether in vain.

Lastly, the state of war with England subjected this attempt to add Egypt to the French dominions, to the risk of defeat, either by the naval strength of Britain interposing between France and her new possessions, or by her land forces from India and Europe, making a combined attack upon the French army which occupied Egypt; both which events actually came to pass.

It is true, that, so far from dreading the English forces which were likely to be employed against them, the French regarded as a recommendation to the conquest of Egypt, that it was to be the first step to the destruction of the British power in India; and Napoleon continued to the last to consider the conquest of Egypt as the forerunner of that of universal Asia. His eye, which, like that of the eagle, saw far and wide, overlooking, however, obstacles which distance rendered diminutive, beheld little more necessary than the toilsome marches of a few weeks, to achieve the conquests of Alexander the Great. He had already counted the steps by which he was to ascend to Oriental monarchy, and has laid before the world a singular reverie on the probabilities of success. "If Saint John d'Acre had yielded to the French arms," said he, "a great revolution would have been accomplished in the East; the general-in-chief would have founded an empire there, and the destinies of France would have undergone different combinations from those to which they were subjected."

In this declaration we recognize one of the peculiarities of Buonaparte's disposition, which refused to allow of any difficulties or dangers save those, of which, having actually happened, the existence could not be disputed. The small British force before Acre was sufficient to destroy his whole plans of conquest; but how many other means of destruction might Providence have employed for the same purpose! The plague—the desert—mutiny among his soldiers—courage and enterprise, inspired by favourable circumstances into the tribes by whom his progress was opposed—the computation of these, and other chances, ought to have taught him to acknowledge, that he had not been discomfited by the only hazard which could have disconcerted his enterprize; but that, had such been the will of God, the sands of Syria might have proved as fatal as the snows of Russia, and the scimitars of the Turks as the lances of the Cossacks. In words, a march from Egypt to India is easily described, and still more easily measured off with compasses upon the map of the world. But in practice, and with an army opposed as the French would probably have been at every step, if it had been only from motives of religious antipathy, when the French general arrived at the skirts of British India, with forces thus diminish-

ad, he would have had in front the whole British army, commanded by generals accustomed to make war upon a scale almost as enlarged as he himself practised, and accustomed to victories not less decisive.

We should fall into the same error which we censure, did we anticipate what might have been the result of such a meeting. Even while we claim the probability of advantage for the army most numerous, and best provided with guns and stores, we allow the strife must have been dreadful and dubious. But if Napoleon really thought he had only to show himself in India, to ensure the destruction of the British empire there, he had not calculated the opposing strength with the caution to have been expected from so great a general. He has been represented, indeed, as boasting of the additions which he would have made to his army, by the co-operation of natives trained after the French discipline. But can it be supposed that these hasty levies could be brought into such complete order as to face the native troops of British India, so long and so justly distinguished for approaching Europeans in courage and discipline, and excelling them perhaps in temperance and subordination?

In a word, the Egyptian expedition, unless considered with reference to the private views of the Directory, and of their general, must have been regarded from the beginning, as promising no results in the slightest degree worthy of the great risk incurred, by draining France of the flower of her army.

Meanwhile, the moment of departure approached. The blockading squadron, commanded by Nelson, was blown off the coast by a gale of wind, and so much damaged that they were obliged to run down to Sardinia. The first and most obvious obstacle to the expedition was thus removed. The various squadrons from Genoa, Civita Vecchia, and Bastia, set sail and united with that which already lay at Toulon.

Yet it is said, though upon slender authority, that even at this latest moment Buonaparte showed some inclination to abandon the command of so doubtful and almost desperate an expedition, and wished to take the advantage of a recent dispute between France and Austria, to remain in Europe. The misunderstanding arose from the conduct of Bernadotte, ambassador for the Republic at Vienna, who incautiously displayed the national colours before his hotel, in consequence of which a popular tumult arose, and the ambassador was insulted. In their first alarm, lest this incident should occasion a renewal of the war, the Directory hastily determined to suspend Buonaparte's departure, and despatch him to Rastadt, where the congress was still sitting, with full powers to adjust the difference. Buonaparte accepted the commission, and while he affected to deplore the delay or miscarriage of "the greatest enterprise which he had ever meditated," wrote in secret to Count Cobentzel, now minister of foreign affairs at Vienna, inviting him to a conference at Rastadt, and hinting at political changes, by which the difficulties attending the execution of the treaty of Campo Formio might be taken away. The tenor of this letter having become known to the Directory, and it appearing to them that Buonaparte designed to make that mission a pretext for interesting Cobentzel in some change of government in France, in which he deemed it advisable to obtain the concurrence of Austria, they instantly resolved, it is said, to compel him to set sail on the expedition to Egypt. Barras, charged with the commission of notifying to the general this second alteration of his destination, had an interview with Buonaparte in private, and at his own house. The mien of the Director was clouded, and, contrary to his custom, he scarcely spoke to Madame Buonaparte. When he retired, Buonaparte shut himself up in his own apartment for a short time, then gave directions for his instant departure from Paris for Toulon. These particulars are given as certain by Miot;* but he alleges no authority for this piece of secret history. There seems, however, little doubt, that the command of the

* *Memoires pour servir à l'Histoire des Expéditions en Egypt et en Syrie. Introduction, p. xi.*

Egyptian expedition was bestowed on Buonaparte by the Directory as a species of ostracism, or honourable banishment from France.

At the moment of departure, Buonaparte made one of those singular harangues, which evince such a mixture of talent and energy with bad taste and bombast. He promised to introduce those who had warred on the mountains and in the plains, to maritime combat; and to a great part of the expedition he kept his word too truly, as Aboukir could witness. He reminded them that the Romans combated Carthage by sea as well as land—he proposed to conduct them, in the name of the Goddess of Liberty, to the most distant regions and oceans, and he concluded by promising to each individual of his army seven acres of land. Whether this distribution of property was to take place on the banks of the Nile, of the Bosphorus, or the Ganges, the soldiers had not the most distant guess, and the commander-in-chief himself would have had difficulty in informing them.

On the 10th of May 1798, this magnificent armament set sail from Toulon, illuminated by a splendid sun-rise, one of those which were afterwards popularly termed the suns of Napoleon. The line-of-battle ships extended for a league, and the semi-circle formed by the convoy was at least six leagues in extent. They were joined on the 8th June, as they swept along the Mediterranean, by a large fleet of transports, having on board the division of General Dessaix.

The 10th June brought the armament before Malta, once the citadel of Christendom, and garrisoned by those intrepid knights, who, half warriors and half priests, opposed the infidels with the enthusiasm at once of religion and of chivalry. But those by whom the Order was now maintained were disunited among themselves, lazy and debauched voluptuaries, who consumed the revenues destined to fit out expeditions against the Turks in cruises for pleasure, not war, and giving balls and entertainments in the seaports of Italy. Buonaparte treated these degenerate knights with a want of ceremony, which, however little it accorded with the extreme strength of their island, and with the glorious defence which it had formerly made against the infidels, was perfectly suited to their present condition. Secure of a party among the French knights, with whom he had been tampering, he landed troops, and took possession of these almost impregnable fortresses with so little opposition, that Caffarelli said to Napoleon, as they passed through the most formidable defences,—“It is well, general, that there was some one within to open the gates to us. We should have had more trouble in entering, if the place had been altogether empty.”

A sufficient garrison was established in Malta, destined by Buonaparte to be an intermediate station between France and Egypt; and on the 19th, the daring general resumed his expedition. On the coast of Candia, while the savants were gazing on the rocks where Jupiter, it is said, was nurtured, and speculating concerning the existence of some vestiges of the celebrated Labyrinth, Buonaparte learned that a new enemy, of a different description from the Knights of Saint John, were in his immediate vicinity. This was the English squadron.

Nelson, to the end as unconquerable on his own element as Buonaparte had hitherto shown himself upon shore, was now in full and anxious pursuit of his renowned contemporary. Reinforced by a squadron of ten ships of the line, a meeting with Napoleon was the utmost wish of his heart, and was echoed back by the meanest sailor on board his numerous fleet. The French had been heard of at Malta, but as the British Admiral was about to proceed thither, he received news of their departure; and concluding that Egypt must be unquestionably the object of their expedition, he made sail for Egypt. It singularly happened, that although Nelson anticipated the arrival of the French at Alexandria, and accordingly directed his course thither, yet, keeping a more direct

path than Brueyes, when he arrived there on the 28th June, he heard nothing of the enemy, who, in the meanwhile, were proceeding to the very same port. The English admiral set sail, therefore, for Rhodes and Syracuse; and thus were the two large and hostile fleets traversing the same narrow sea, without being able to attain any certain tidings of each other's movements. This was in part owing to the English Admiral having no frigates with him, which might have been detached to cruise for intelligence; partly to a continuance of thick misty weather, which at once concealed the French fleet from their adversaries, and, obliging them to keep close together, diminished the chance of discovery, which might otherwise have taken place by the occupation of a larger space. On the 26th, according to Denon, Nelson's fleet was actually seen by the French standing to the westward, although the haze prevented the English from observing their enemy, whose squadron held an opposite direction.

Escaped from the risk of an encounter so perilous, Buonaparte's greatest danger seemed to be over on the 29th June, when the French fleet came in sight of Alexandria, and saw before them the city of the Ptolomies and of Cleopatra, with its double harbour, its Pharos, and its ancient and gigantic monuments of grandeur. Yet at this critical moment, and while Buonaparte contemplated his meditated conquest, a signal announced the appearance of a strange sail, which was construed to be an English frigate, the precursor of the British fleet, "What!" said Napoleon, "I ask but six hours—and, Fortune, wilt thou abandon me?" The fickle goddess was then and for many a succeeding year, true to her votary. The vessel proved friendly.

The disembarkation of the French army took place about a league and a half from Alexandria, at an anchorage called Marabout. It was not accomplished without losing boats and men on the surf, though such risks were encountered with great joy by the troops, who had been so long confined on ship-board. As soon as five or six thousand men were landed, Buonaparte marched towards Alexandria, when the Turks, incensed at this hostile invasion on the part of a nation with whom they were at profound peace, shut the gates, and manned the walls against their reception. But the walls were ruinous, and presented breaches in many places, and the chief weapons of resistance were musketry and stones. The conquerors of Italy forced their passage over such obstacles, but not easily or with impunity. Two hundred French were killed. There was severe military execution done upon the garrison, and the town was abandoned to plunder for three hours; which has been justly stigmatized as an act of unnecessary cruelty, perpetrated only to strike terror, and extend the fame of the victorious French general. But it was Napoleon's object to impress the highest idea of his power upon the various classes of natives, who, differing widely from each other in manners and condition, inhabit Egypt as their common home.

These classes are, 1st, the Arab race, divided into Fellahs and Bedouins, the most numerous and least esteemed of the population. The Bedouins, retaining the manners of Arabia Proper, rove through the Desert, and subsist by means of their flocks and herds. The Fellahs cultivate the earth, and are the ordinary peasants of the country.

The class next above the Arabs in consideration are the Cophts, supposed to be descended from the pristine Egyptians. They profess Christianity, are timid and unwarlike, but artful and supple. They are employed in the revenue, and in almost all civil offices, and transact the commerce and the business of the country.

The third class in elevation were the formidable Mamelukes, who held both Cophts and Arabs in profound subjection. These are, or we may say were, a corps of professed soldiers, having no trade excepting war. In this they resemble the Janissaries, the Strelitzes, the Prætorian Bands, or similar military

bodies, which, constituting a standing army under a despotic government, are alternately the protectors and the terror of the sovereign who is their nominal commander. But the peculiar feature of the constitution of the Mamelukes, was, that their corps was recruited only by the adoption of foreign slaves, particularly Georgians and Circassians. These were purchased when children by the several Beys, or Mameluke leaders, who, twenty-four in number, occupied, each, one of the twenty-four departments into which they had divided Egypt. The youthful slave, purchased with a heedful reference to his strength and personal appearance, was carefully trained to arms in the family of his master. When created a Mameluke, he was received into the troop of the Bey, and rendered capable of succeeding to him at his death; for these chiefs despised the ordinary connexions of blood, and their authority was, upon military principles, transferred at their death to him amongst the band who was accounted the best soldier. They fought always on horseback; and in their peculiar mode of warfare, they might be termed, individually considered, the finest cavalry in the world. Completely armed, and unboundedly confident in their own prowess, they were intrepid, skilful, and formidable in battle; but with their military bravery began and ended the catalogue of their virtues. Their vices were, unpitying cruelty, habitual oppression, and the unlimited exercise of the most gross and disgusting sensuality. Such were the actual lords of Egypt.

Yet the right of sovereignty did not rest with the Beys, but with the Pacha, or Lieutenant,—a great officer despatched from the Porte to represent the Grand Seignior in Egypt, where it was his duty to collect the tribute in money and grain, which Constantinople expected from that rich province, with the additional object of squeezing out of the country as much more as he could by any means secure, for the filling of his own coffers. The Pacha maintained his authority sometimes by the assistance of Turkish troops, sometimes by exciting the jealousy of one Bey against another. Thus this fertile country was subjected to the oppression of twenty-four prætors, who, whether they agreed among themselves, or with the Pacha, or declared war against the representative of the Sultan, and against each other, were alike the terror and the scourge of the unhappy Arabs and Cophts, the right of oppressing whom by every species of exaction, these haughty slaves regarded as their noblest and most undeniable privilege.

From the moment that Buonaparte conceived the idea of invading Egypt, the destruction of the power of the Mamelukes must have been determined upon as his first object; and he had no sooner taken Alexandria than he announced his purpose. He sent forth a proclamation, in which he professed his respect for God, the Prophet, and the Koran; his friendship for the Sublime Porte, of which he affirmed the French to be the faithful allies; and his determination to make war upon the Mamelukes. He commanded that the prayers should be continued in the mosques as usual, with some slight modifications, and that all true Moslems should exclaim, “Glory to the Sultan, and to the French army, his allies!—Accursed be the Mamelukes, and good fortune to the land of Egypt!”

Upon the 5th July the army marched from Alexandria against the Mamelukes. Their course was up the Nile, and a small flotilla of gun-boats ascended the river to protect their right flank, while the infantry traversed a desert of burning sands, at a distance from the stream, and without a drop of water to relieve their tormenting thirst. The army of Italy, accustomed to the enjoyments of that delicious country, were astonished at the desolation they saw around them. “Is this,” they said, “the country in which we are to receive our farms of seven acres each? The General might have allowed us to take as much as we chose—no one would have abused the privilege.” Their officers, too, expressed horror and disgust; and even generals of such celebrity as Murat and Lannes

threw their hats on the sand, and trod on their cockades. It required all Buonaparte's authority to maintain order, so much were the French disgusted with the commencement of the expedition.

To add to their embarrassment, the enemy began to appear around them. Mamelukes and Arabs, concealed behind the hillocks of sand, interrupted their march at every opportunity, and woe to the soldier who straggled from the ranks, were it but fifty yards. Some of these horsemen were sure to dash at him, slay him on the spot, and make off before a musket could be discharged at them. At length, however, the audacity of these incursions was checked by a skirmish of some little importance, near a place called Chehrheis, in which the French asserted their military superiority.

An encounter also took place on the river, between the French flotilla and a number of armed vessels belonging to the Mamelukes. Victory first inclined to the latter, but at length determined in favour of the French, who took, however, only a single galliot.

Meanwhile, the French were obliged to march with the utmost precaution. The whole plain was now covered with Mamelukes, mounted on the finest Arabian horses, and armed with pistols, carabines, and blunderbusses, of the best English workmanship—their plumed turbans waving in the air, and their rich dresses and arms glittering in the sun. Entertaining a high contempt for the French force, as consisting almost entirely of infantry, this splendid barbaric chivalry watched every opportunity for charging them, nor did a single straggler escape the unrelenting edge of their sabres. Their charge was almost as swift as the wind, and as their severe bits enabled them to halt, or wheel their horses at full gallop, their retreat was as rapid as their advance. Even the practised veterans of Italy were at first embarrassed by this new mode of fighting, and lost several men; especially when fatigue caused any one to fall out of the ranks, in which case his fate became certain. But they were soon reconciled to fighting the Mamelukes, when they discovered that each of these horsemen carried about him his fortune, and that it not uncommonly amounted to considerable sums in gold.

During these alarms, the French love of the ludicrous was not abated by the fatigues or dangers of the journey. The savants had been supplied with asses, the beasts of burden easiest attained in Egypt, to transport their persons and philosophical apparatus. The General had given orders to attend to their personal safety, which were of course obeyed. But as these civilians had little importance in the eyes of the military, loud shouts of laughter used to burst from the ranks, while forming to receive the Mamelukes, as the general of division called out, with military precision, "Let the asses and the savants enter within the square." The soldiers also amused themselves by calling the asses demi-savants. In times of discontent, these unlucky servants of science had their full share of the soldiers' reproaches, who imagined, that this unpopular expedition had been undertaken to gratify their passion for researches, in which the military took very slender interest.

Under such circumstances, it may be doubted whether even the literati themselves were greatly delighted, when, after seven days of such marches as we have described, they arrived indeed within six leagues of Cairo, and beheld at a distance the celebrated Pyramids, but learned at the same time, that Murad Bey, with twenty-two of his brethren, at the head of their Mamelukes, had formed an entrenched camp at a place called Embabeh, with the purpose of covering Cairo, and giving battle to the French. On the 11th of July, as the French continued to advance, they saw their enemy in the field, and in full force. A splendid line of cavalry, under Murad and the other Beys, displayed the whole strength of the Mamelukes. Their right rested on the imperfectly entrenched camp, in which lay twenty thousand infantry, defended by forty pieces of cannon. But the infantry were an undisciplined rabble; the guns

wanting carriages, were mounted on clumsy wooden frames; and the fortifications of the camp were but commenced, and presented no formidable opposition. Buonaparte made his dispositions. He extended his line to the right, in such a manner as to keep out of gun-shot of the entrenched camp, and have only to encounter the line of cavalry.

Murad Bey saw this movement, and, fully aware of its consequence, prepared to charge with his magnificent body of horse, declaring he would cut the French up like gourds. Buonaparte, as he directed the infantry to form squares to receive them, called out to his men, "From yonder Pyramids twenty centuries behold your actions." The Mamelukes advanced with the utmost speed, and corresponding fury, and charged with horrible yells. They disordered one of the French squares of infantry, which would have been sabred in an instant, but that the mass of this fiery militia was a little behind the advanced guard. The French had a moment to restore order, and used it. The combat then in some degree resembled that which, nearly twenty years afterwards, took place at Waterloo; the hostile cavalry furiously charging the squares of infantry, and trying, by the most undaunted efforts of courage, to break in upon them at every practicable point, while a tremendous fire of musketry, grape-shot, and shells, crossing in various directions, repaid their audacity. Nothing in war was ever seen more desperate than the exertions of the Mamelukes. Failing to force their horses through the French squares, individuals were seen to wheel them round and rein them back on the ranks, that they might disorder them by kicking. As they became frantic with despair, they hurled at the immovable phalanxes, which they could not break, their pistols, their poniards, and their carabines. Those who fell wounded to the ground, dragged themselves on, to cut at the legs of the French with their crooked sabres. But their efforts were all in vain.

The Mamelukes, after the most courageous efforts to accomplish their purpose, were finally beaten off with great slaughter; and as they could not form or act in squadron, their retreat became a confused flight. The greater part attempted to return to their camp, from that sort of instinct, as Napoleon termed it, which leads fugitives to retire in the same direction in which they had advanced. By taking this route they placed themselves betwixt the French and the Nile; and the sustained and insupportable fire of the former soon obliged them to plunge into the river, in hopes to escape by swimming to the opposite bank—a desperate effort, in which few succeeded. Their infantry at the same time evacuated their camp without a show of resistance, precipitated themselves into the boats, and endeavoured to cross the Nile. Very many of these also were destroyed. The French soldiers long afterwards occupied themselves in fishing for the drowned Mamelukes, and failed not to find money and valuables upon all whom they could recover. Murad Bey, with a part of his best Mamelukes, escaped the slaughter by a more regular movement to the left, and retreated by Gizeh into Upper Egypt.

Thus were in a great measure destroyed the finest cavalry, considered as individual horsemen, that were ever known to exist. "Could I have united the Mameluke horse to the French infantry," said Buonaparte, "I would have reckoned myself master of the world." The destruction of a body hitherto regarded as invincible, struck terror, not through Egypt only, but far into Africa and Asia, wherever the Moslem religion prevailed; and the rolling fire of musketry by which the victory was achieved, procured for Buonaparte the oriental appellation, of Sultan Kebir, or King of Fire.

After this combat, which, to render it more striking to the Parisians, Buonaparte termed the "Battle of the Pyramids," Cairo surrendered without resistance. The shattered remains of the Mamelukes who had swam the Nile and united under Ibrahim Bey, were compelled to retreat into Syria. A party of three hundred French cavalry ventured to attack them at Salahieh, but were severely

handled by Ibrahim Bey and his followers, who, having cut many of them to pieces, pursued their retreat without farther interruption. Lower Egypt was completely in the hands of the French, and thus far the expedition of Buonaparte had been perfectly successful. But it was not the will of Heaven, that even the most fortunate of men should escape reverses, and a severe one awaited Napoleon.

CHAPTER XXIX.

French Naval Squadron.—Conflicting Statements of Buonaparte and Admiral Gantheaume in regard to it.—BATTLE OF ABOUKIR on 15th August 1798.—Number and Position of the Enemy, and of the English—Particulars of the Action.—The French Admiral, Brueyes, killed, and his ship, L'Orient, blown up.—The Victory complete, two only of the French Fleet, and two Frigates, escaping on the morning of the 16th.—Effects of this disaster on the French Army.—Means by which Napoleon proposed to establish himself in Egypt.—His Administration in many respects useful and praiseworthy—in others, his Conduct impolitic and absurd.—He desires to be regarded an Envoy of the Deity, but without success.—His endeavours equally unsuccessful to propitiate the Porte.—The Fort of El Arish falls into his hands.—Massacre of Jaffa—Admitted by Buonaparte himself—His arguments in its defence—Replies to them—General Conclusions.—Plague breaks out in the French Army.—Napoleon's humanity and courage upon this occasion.—Proceeds against Acre to attack Djezzar Pacha.—Sir Sidney Smith—His character—Captures a French Convoy, and throws himself into Acre.—French arrive before Acre on 17th March 1799, and effect a breach on the 28th, but are driven back.—Assaulted by an Army of Moslems of various Nations assembled without the Walls of Acre, whom they defeat and disperse.—Interesting particulars of the Siege.—Personal misunderstanding and hostility betwixt Napoleon and Sir Sidney Smith—explained and accounted for.—Buonaparte is finally compelled to raise the Siege and retreat.

WHEN Buonaparte and his army were safely landed in Egypt, policy seemed to demand that the naval squadron, by which they had been escorted, should have been sent back to France as soon as possible. The French leader accordingly repeatedly asserts, that he had positively commanded Admiral Brueyes, an excellent officer, for whom he himself entertained particular respect,* either to carry his squadron of men-of-war into the harbour of Alexandria, or, that being found impossible, instantly to set sail for Corfu. The harbour, by report of the Turkish pilots, was greatly too shallow to admit without danger vessels of such a deep draught of water; and it scarce can be questioned that Admiral Brueyes would have embraced the alternative of setting sail for Corfu, had such been in reality permitted by his orders. But the assertion of Buonaparte is pointedly contradicted by the report of Vice-Admiral Gantheaume, who was himself in the battle of Aboukir, escaped from the slaughter with difficulty, and was intrusted by Buonaparte with drawing up the account of the disaster, which he transmitted to the minister of war. "Perhaps it may be said," so the despatch bears, "that it would have been advisable to have quitted the coast as soon as the disembarkation had taken place. But considering the orders of the commander-in-chief, and the incalculable force afforded to the land-army by the

* In a letter published in the *Moniteur*, No. 90, l'an 6, Buonaparte expresses the highest sense of Admiral Brueyes' firmness and talent, as well as of the high order in which he kept the squadron under his command; and concludes by saying, he had bestowed on him, in the name of the Directory, a spy-glass of the best construction which Italy afforded.

presence of the squadron, the admiral thought it was his duty not to quit these seas."

Looking at the matter more closely—considering the probability of Nelson's return, and the consequent danger of the fleet—considering, too, the especial interest which naval and military officers attach each to their peculiar service, and the relative disregard with which they contemplate the other, we can see several reasons why Buonaparte might have wished, even at some risk, to detain the fleet on the coast of Egypt, but not one which could induce Brueyes to continue there, not only without the consent of the commander-in-chief, but, as Napoleon afterwards alleged, against his express orders. It is one of the cases in which no degree of liberality can enable us to receive the testimony of Buonaparte, contradicted at once by circumstances, and by the positive testimony of Gantheaume.

We now approach one of the most brilliant actions of the English navy, achieved by the Admiral whose exploits so indisputably asserted the right of Britain to the dominion of the ocean. Our limits require that we should state but briefly a tale, at which every heart in our islands will long glow; and we are the more willingly concise that our readers possess it at length in one of the best-written popular histories in the English language.*

Although unable to enter the harbour of Alexandria, the French admiral believed his squadron safely moored in the celebrated Bay of Aboukir. They formed a compact line of battle, of a semi-circular form, anchored so close to the shoal-water and surf, that it was thought impossible to get between them and the land; and they concluded, therefore, that they could be brought to action on the starboard side only. On the 15th August the British fleet appeared; and Nelson had no sooner reconnoitred the French position than he resolved to force it at every risk. Where the French ships could ride, he argued with instantaneous decision, there must be room for English vessels to anchor between them and the shore. He made signal for the attack accordingly. As the vessels approached the French anchorage, they received a heavy and raking fire, to which they could make no return; but they kept their bows to the enemy, and continued to near their line. The squadrons were nearly of the same numerical strength. The French had thirteen ships of the line and four frigates. The English, thirteen ships of the line, and one 50 gun ship. But the French had three 80 gun ships, and *L'Orient*, a superb vessel of 120 guns. All the British were seventy-fours. The van of the English fleet, six in number, rounded successively the French line, and dropping anchor betwixt them and the shore, opened a tremendous fire. Nelson himself, and his other vessels, ranged along the same French ships on the outer side, and thus placed them betwixt two fires; while the rest of the French line remained for a time unable to take a share in the combat. The battle commenced with the utmost fury, and lasted till, the sun having set, and the night fallen, there was no light by which the combat could be continued, save the flashes of the continuous broadsides. Already, however, some of the French vessels were taken, and the victors, advancing onwards, assailed those which had not yet been engaged.

Meantime a broad and dreadful light was thrown on the scene of action, by the breaking out of a conflagration on board the French admiral's flag-ship, *L'Orient*. Brueyes himself had by this time fallen by a cannon-shot. The flames soon mastered the immense vessel, where the carnage was so terrible as to prevent all attempts to extinguish them; and the *L'Orient* remained blazing like a volcano in the middle of the combat, rendering for a time the dreadful spectacle visible.

* Mr Southey's "*Life of Admiral Nelson*;" in which one of the most distinguished men of genius and learning which our age has produced, has recorded the actions of the greatest naval hero that ever existed.

At length, and while the battle continued as furious as ever, the burning vessel blew up with so tremendous an explosion, that for a while it silenced the fire on both sides, and made an awful pause in the midst of what had been but lately so horrible a tumult. The cannonade was at first slowly and partially resumed, but ere midnight it raged with all its original fury. In the morning the only two French ships who had their colours flying, cut their cables and put to sea, accompanied by two frigates; being all that remained undestroyed and uncaptured, of the gallant navy that so lately escorted Buonaparte and his fortunes in triumph across the Mediterranean.

Such was the victory of Aboukir, for which he who achieved it felt that word was inadequate. He called it a conquest. The advantages of the day, great as they were, might have been pushed much farther, if Nelson had been possessed of frigates and small craft. The store-ships and transports in the harbour of Alexandria would then have been infallibly destroyed. As it was, the results were of the utmost importance, and the destinies of the French army were altered in proportion. They had no longer any means of communicating with the mother-country, but became the inhabitants of an insulated province, obliged to rely exclusively on the resources which they had brought with them, joined to those which Egypt might afford.

Buonaparte, however surprised by this reverse, exhibited great equanimity. Three thousand French seamen, the remainder of nearly six thousand engaged in that dreadful battle, were sent ashore by cartel, and formed a valuable addition to his forces. Nelson, more grieved almost at being frustrated of his complete purpose, than rejoiced at his victory, left the coast after establishing a blockade on the port of Alexandria.

We are now to trace the means by which Napoleon proposed to establish and consolidate his government in Egypt; and in these we can recognize much that was good and excellent, mixed with such irregularity of imagination, as vindicates the term of Jupiter Scapin, by which the Abbe de Pradt distinguished this extraordinary man.

His first care was to gather up the reins of government, such as they were, which had dropt from the hands of the defeated Beys. With two classes of the Egyptian nation it was easy to establish his authority. The Fellahs, or peasantry, sure to be squeezed to the last penny by one party or other, willingly submitted to the invaders as the strongest, and the most able to protect them. The Cophts, or men of business, were equally ready to serve the party which was in possession of the country. So that the French became the masters of both, as a natural consequence of the power which they had obtained.

But the Turks were to be attached to the conqueror by other means, since their haughty national character, and the intolerance of the Mahomedan religion, rendered them alike inaccessible to profit, the hope of which swayed the Cophts, and to fear, which was the prevailing argument with the Fellahs. To gratify their vanity, and soothe their prejudices, seemed the only mode by which Napoleon could insinuate himself into the favour of this part of the population. With this view, Buonaparte was far from assuming a title of conquest in Egypt, though he left few of its rights unexercised. On the contrary, he wisely continued to admit the Pacha to that ostensible share of authority which was yielded to him by the Beys, and spoke with as much seeming respect of the Sublime Porte, as if it had been his intention ever again to permit their having any effective power in Egypt. Their Imaums, or priests; their Ulemats, or men of law; their Cadis, or judges; their Sheiks, or chiefs; their Janissaries, or privileged soldiers, were all treated by Napoleon with a certain degree of attention, and the Sultan Kebir, as they called him, affected to govern, like the Grand Seignior, by the intervention of a Divan.

This general council consisted of about forty Sheiks, of Moslems of distinction by birth or office, who held their regular meetings at Cairo, and from which

body emanated the authority of provincial divans, established in the various departments of Egypt. Napoleon affected to consult the superior council, and act in many cases according to their report of the law of the Prophet. On one occasion, he gave them a moral lesson which it would be great injustice to suppress. A tribe of roving Arabs had slain a peasant, and Buonaparte had given directions to search out and punish the murderers. One of his Oriental counsellors laughed at the zeal which the General manifested on so slight a cause.

"What have you to do with the death of this Fellah, Sultan Kebir?" said he ironically; "was he your kinsamn?"

"He was more," said Napoleon; "He was one for whose safety I am accountable to God, who placed him under my government."

"He speaks like an inspired person!" exclaimed the Sheiks; who can admire the beauty of a just sentiment, though incapable, from the scope they allow their passions, to act up to the precepts of moral rectitude.

Thus far the conduct of Buonaparte was admirable. He protected the people who were placed under his power, he respected their religious opinions, he administered justice to them according to their own laws, until they should be supplied with a better system of legislation. Unquestionably, his good administration did not amend the radical deficiency of his title; it was still chargeable against him, that he had invaded the dominions of the most ancient ally of France, at a time when there was the most profound peace between the countries. Yet in delivering Egypt from the tyrannical sway of the Mamelukes, and administering the government of the country with wisdom and comparative humanity, the mode in which he used the power which he had acquired, might be admitted in some measure to atone for his usurpation. Not contented with directing his soldiers to hold in respect the religious observances of the country, he showed equal justice and policy in collecting and protecting the scattered remains of the great caravan of the Mecca pilgrimage, which had been plundered by the Mamelukes on their retreat. So satisfactory was his conduct to the Moslem divines, that he contrived to obtain from the clergy of the Mosque an opinion, declaring that it was lawful to pay tribute to the French, though such a doctrine is diametrically inconsistent with the Koran. Thus far Napoleon's measures had proved rational and successful. But with this laudable course of conduct was mixed a species of artifice, which, while we are compelled to term it impious, has in it, at the same time, something ludicrous, and almost childish.

Buonaparte entertained the strange idea of persuading the Moslems that he himself pertained in some sort to their religion, being an envoy of the Deity, sent on earth, not to take away, but to confirm and complete, the doctrines of the Koran, and the mission of Mahomet. He used, in executing this purpose, the inflated language of the East, the more easily that it corresponded, in its allegorical and amplified style, with his own natural tone of composition; and he hesitated not to join in the external ceremonial of the Mahomedan religion, that his actions might seem to confirm his words. The French general celebrated the feast of the Prophet as it recurred, with some Sheik of eminence, and joined in the litanies and worship enjoined by the Koran. He affected, too, the language of an inspired follower of the faith of Mecca, of which the following is a curious example.

On entering the sepulchral chamber in the pyramid of Cheops, "Glory be to Allah," said Buonaparte, "there is no God but God, and Mahommed is his prophet." A confession of faith which is in itself a declaration of Islamism.

"Thou hast spoken like the most learned of the prophets," said the Mufti, who accompanied him.

"I can command a car of fire to descend from heaven," continued the French general, "and I can guide and direct its course upon earth."

"Thou art the great chief to whom Mahommed gives power and victory," said the Mufti.

Napoleon closed the conversation with this not very pertinent oriental proverb, "The bread which the wicked seizes upon by force, shall be turned to dust in his mouth."

Though the Mufti played his part in the above scene with becoming gravity, Buonaparte over-estimated his own theatrical powers, and did too little justice to the shrewdness of the Turks, if he supposed them really edified by his pretended proselytism. With them as with us, a renegade from the religious faith in which he was brought up, is like a deserter from the standard of his country; and though the services of either may be accepted and used, they remain objects of disregard and contempt, as well with those to whose service they have deserted, as with the party whom they have abandoned.

The Turks and Arabs of Cairo soon afterwards showed Buonaparte, by a general and unexpected insurrection in which many Frenchmen were slain, how little they were moved by his pretended attachment to their faith, and how cordially they considered him as their enemy. Yet, when the insurgents had been quelled by force, and the blood of five thousand Moslem had atoned for that of three hundred Frenchmen, Napoleon, in an address to the inhabitants of Cairo, new-modelling the general council, or divan, held still the same language as before of himself and his destinies. "Sheriffs," he said, "Ulemats, Orators of the Mosque, teach the people that those who become my enemies shall have no refuge either in this world or the next. Is there any one blind enough not to see that I am the agent of Destiny, or incredulous enough to call in question the power of Destiny over human affairs? Make the people understand that since the world was a world, it was ordained, that having destroyed the enemies of Islamism, and broken down the Cross,* I should come from the distant parts of the West to accomplish the task designed for me—show them, that in more than twenty passages of the Koran my coming is foretold. I could demand a reckoning from each of you for the most secret thoughts of his soul, since to me everything is known; but the day will come when all shall know from whom I have my commission, and that human efforts cannot prevail against me."

It is plain from this strange proclamation, that Buonaparte was willing to be worshipped as a superior being, as soon as altars could be built, and worshippers collected together. But the Turks and Arabs were wiser than the Persians in the case of young Ammon. The Sheik of Alexandria, who affected much devotion to Buonaparte's person, came roundly to the point with him. He remarked the French observed no religious worship. "Why not, therefore," he said, "declare yourself Moslem at once, and remove the only obstacle betwixt you and the throne of the East?" Buonaparte objected the prohibition of wine, and the external rite which Mahommed adopted from the Jewish religion. The officious Sheik proposed to call a council of the Moslem sages, and procure for the new proselytes some relaxation of these fundamental laws of the Prophet's faith. According to this hopeful plan the Moslems must have ceased to be such in two principal articles of their ritual, in order to induce the French to become a kind of imperfect renegades, rejecting, in the prohibition of wine, the only peculiar guard which Mahommed assigned to the moral virtue of his followers, while they embraced the degrading doctrine of fatality, the licentious practice of polygamy, and the absurd chimeras of the Koran.

Napoleon appears to have believed the Sheik serious, which is very doubtful, and to have contemplated with eager ambition the extent of views which his conversion to Islamism appeared to open. His own belief in predestination recommended the creed of Mahommed, and for the Prophet of Mecca himself he had a high respect, as one of those who had wrought a great and enduring change on the face of the world. Perhaps he envied the power which Ma-

* Alluding to the capture of the island of Malta, and subjection of the Pope, on which he was wont to found as services rendered to the religion of Mahommed.

homed possessed, of ruling over men's souls as well as their bodies, and might thence have been led into the idea of playing a part, to which time and circumstances, the character of his army and his own, were alike opposed. No man ever succeeded in imposing himself on the public as a supernatural personage, who was not to a certain degree the dupe of his own imposture; and Napoleon's calculating and reflecting mind was totally devoid of the enthusiasm which enables a man to cheat himself into at least a partial belief of the deceit which he would impose on others. The French soldiers, on the other hand, bred in scorn of religion of every description, would have seen nothing but ridicule in the pretensions of their leader to a supernatural mission; and in playing the character which Alexander ventured to personate, Buonaparte would have found in his own army many a Clitus, who would have considered his pretensions as being only ludicrous. He himself, indeed, expressed himself satisfied that his authority over his soldiers was so absolute, that it would have cost but giving it out in the order of the day to have made them all become Mahomedans; but, at the same time, he has acquainted us, that the French troops were at times so much discontented with their condition in Egypt, that they formed schemes of seizing on their standards, and returning to France by force. What reply, it may be reasonably asked, were they likely to make to a proposal, which would have deprived them of their European and French character, and levelled them with Africans and Asiatics, whose persons they despised, and whose country they desired to leave? It is probable, that reflections on the probable consequences prevented his going farther than the vague pretensions which he announced in his proclamations, and in his language to the Sheiks. He had gone far enough, however, to show, that the considerations of conscience would have been no hindrance; and that, notwithstanding the strength of his understanding, common sense had less influence than might have been expected, in checking his assertion of claims so ludicrous as well as so profane. Indeed, his disputes with the Ottoman Porte speedily assumed a character, which his taking the turban and professing himself a Moslem in all the forms could not have altered to his advantage.

It had been promised to Buonaparte that the abilities of Talleyrand, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, should be employed to reconcile the Grand Seignior and his councillors to the occupation of Egypt. But the efforts of that able negotiator had totally failed in a case so evidently hopeless; and if Talleyrand had even proceeded to Constantinople, as Napoleon alleged the Directory had promised, it could only have been to be confined in the Seven Towers. The Porte had long since declared, that any attack upon Egypt, the road to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, would be considered as a declaration of war, whatsoever pretexts might be alleged. They regarded, therefore, Buonaparte's invasion as an injury equally unprovoked and unjustifiable. They declared war against France, called upon every follower of the Prophet to take the part of his vicegerent upon earth, collected forces, and threatened an immediate expedition, for the purpose of expelling the infidels from Egypt. The success of the British at Aboukir increased their confidence. Nelson was loaded with every mark of honour which the Sultan could bestow, and the most active preparations were made to act against Buonaparte, equally considered as enemy to the Porte, whether he professed himself Christian, infidel, or renegade.

Meantime that adventurous and active chief was busied in augmenting his means of defence or conquest, and in acquiring the information necessary to protect what he had gained, and to extend his dominions. For the former purpose, corps were raised from among the Egyptians, and some were mounted upon dromedaries, the better to encounter the perils of the desert. For the latter, Buonaparte undertook a journey to the Isthmus of Suez, the well-known interval which connects Asia with Africa. He subscribed the charter, or protection, granted to the Maronite Monks of Sinai, with the greater pleasure, that

the signature of Mohammed had already sanctioned that ancient document. He visited the celebrated fountains of Moses, and, misled by a guide, had nearly been drowned in the advancing tides of the Red Sea. This, he observes, would have furnished a text to all the preachers in Europe. But the same Deity, who rendered that gulf fatal to Pharaoh, had reserved for one, who equally defied and disowned his power, the rocks of an island in the midst of the Atlantic.

When Napoleon was engaged in this expedition, or speedily on his return, he learned that two Turkish armies had assembled,—one at Rhodes, and the other in Syria, with the purpose of recovering Egypt. The daring genius, which always desired to anticipate the attempts of the enemy, determined him to march with a strong force for the occupation of Syria, and thus at once to alarm the Turks by the progress which he expected to make in that province, and to avoid being attacked in Egypt by two Turkish armies at the same time. His commencement was as successful as his enterprise was daring. A body of Mamelukes was dispersed by a night attack. The fort of El Arish, considered as one of the keys of Egypt, fell easily into his hands. Finally, at the head of about ten thousand men, he traversed the desert, so famous in biblical history, which separates Africa from Asia, and entered Palestine without much loss, but not without experiencing the privations to which the wanderers in those sandy wastes have been uniformly subjected. While his soldiers looked with fear on the howling wilderness which they saw around, there was something in the extent and loneliness of the scene that corresponded with the swelling soul of Napoleon, and accommodated itself to his ideas of immense and boundless space. He was pleased with the flattery, which derived his Christian name from two Greek words, signifying the Lion of the Desert.

Upon his entering the Holy Land, Buonaparte again drove before him a body of Mamelukes, belonging to those who, after the battles of the Pyramids and of Salahieh, had retreated into Syria; and his army occupied without resistance Gaza, anciently a city of the Philistines, in which they found supplies of provisions. Jaffa, a celebrated city during the time of the Crusades, was the next object of attack. It was bravely assaulted, and fiercely defended. But the French valour and discipline prevailed—the place was carried by storm—three thousand Turks were put to the sword, and the town was abandoned to the license of the soldiery, which, by Buonaparte's own admission, never assumed a shape more frightful.* Such, it may be said, is the stern rule of war; and if so, most of our readers will acquiesce in the natural exclamation of the Marechal de Montluc, "Certes, we soldiers stand in more need of the Divine mercy than other men, seeing that our profession compels us to command and to witness deeds of such cruelty." It was not, however, to the ordinary horrors attending the storm of a town, that the charge against Buonaparte is on this occasion limited. He is accused of having been guilty of an action of great injustice, as well as of especial barbarity. Concerning this we shall endeavour to state, stripped of colouring and exaggeration, first the charge, and then the reply, by Napoleon himself.

After the breach had been stormed, a large part of the garrison, estimated by Buonaparte himself at twelve hundred men, which Miot raises to betwixt two and three thousand, and others exaggerate still more, remained on the defensive, and held out in the mosques, and a sort of citadel to which they had retreated, till, at length, despairing of succour, they surrendered their arms, and were in appearance admitted to quarter. Of this body, the Egyptians were carefully separated from the Turks, Maugrabins, and Arnaouts; and while the first were restored to liberty, and sent back to their country, these last were placed under a strong guard. Provisions were distributed to them, and they

* See his despatch to the Directory, on the Syrian campaign.

were permitted to go by detachments in quest of water. According to all appearance, they were considered and treated as prisoners of war. This was on the 18th of March. On the 20th, two days afterwards, this body of prisoners were marched out of Jaffa, in the centre of a large square battalion, commanded by General Bon. Miot assures us that he himself mounted his horse, accompanied the melancholy column, and witnessed the event. The Turks foresaw their fate, but used neither entreaties nor complaints to avert it. They marched on, silent and composed. Some of them, of higher rank, seemed to exhort the others to submit, like servants of the Prophet, to the decree which, according to their belief, was written on their forehead. They were escorted to the sand-hills to the south-east of Jaffa, divided there into small bodies, and put to death by musketry. The execution lasted a considerable time, and the wounded, as in the *fusillades* of the Revolution, were despatched with the bayonet. Their bodies were heaped together, and formed a pyramid which is still visible, consisting now of human bones as originally of bloody corpses.

The cruelty of this execution occasioned the fact itself to be doubted, though coming with strong evidence, and never denied by the French themselves. Napoleon, however, frankly admitted the truth of the statement both to Lord Ebrington and to Dr O'Meara. Well might the author of this cruelty write to the Directory, that the storm of Jaffa was marked by horrors which he had never elsewhere witnessed. Buonaparte's defence was, that the massacre was justified by the laws of war—that the head of his messenger had been cut off by the governor of Jaffa, when sent to summon him to surrender—that these Turks were a part of the garrison of El Arish, who had engaged not to serve against the French, and were found immediately afterwards defending Jaffa, in breach of the terms of their capitulation. They had incurred the doom of death, therefore, by the rules of war—Wellington, he said, would have in his place acted in the same manner.

To this plea the following obvious answers apply. If the Turkish governor had behaved like a barbarian, for which his country, and the religion which Napoleon meditated to embrace, might be some excuse, the French general had avenged himself by the storm and plunder of the town, with which his revenge ought in all reason to have been satisfied. If some of these unhappy Turks had broken their faith to Buonaparte, and were found again in the ranks which they had sworn to abandon, it could not, according to the most severe construction of the rules of war, authorize the dreadful retaliation of indiscriminate massacre upon a multitude of prisoners, without inquiring whether they had been all equally guilty. Lastly, and admitting them all to stand in the same degree of criminality, although their breach of faith might have entitled Buonaparte to refuse these men quarter while they had arms in their hands, that right was ended when the French general received their submission, and when they had given up the means of defence, on condition of safety for life at least.

This bloody deed must always remain a deep stain on the character of Napoleon. Yet we do not view it as the indulgence of an innate love of cruelty; for nothing in Buonaparte's history shows the existence of that vice, and there are many things which intimate his disposition to have been naturally humane. But he was ambitious, aimed at immense and gigantic undertakings, and easily learned to overlook the waste of human life, which the execution of his projects necessarily involved. He seems to have argued, not on the character of the action, but solely on the effect which it was to produce upon his own combinations. His army was small; it was his business to strike terror into his numerous enemies, and the measure to be adopted seemed capable of making a deep impression on all who should hear of it. Besides, these men, if dismissed, would immediately rejoin his enemies. He had experienced their courage, and to disarm them would have been almost an unavailing precaution, where their national weapon, the sabre, was so easily attained. To detain them pris

oners would have required a stronger force than Napoleon could afford, would have added difficulty and delay to the movement of his troops, and tended to exhaust his supplies. That sort of necessity, therefore, which men fancy to themselves when they are unwilling to forego a favourite object for the sake of obeying a moral precept—that necessity which might be more properly termed a temptation difficult to be resisted—that necessity which has been called the tyrant's plea, was the cause of the massacre at Jaffa, and must remain its sole apology.

It might almost seem that Heaven set its vindictive brand upon this deed of butchery, for about the time it was committed the plague broke out in the army. Buonaparte, with a moral courage deserving as much praise as his late cruelty deserved reprobation, went into the hospitals in person, and while exposing himself, without hesitation, to the infection, diminished the terror of the disease in the opinion of the soldiers generally, and even of the patients themselves, who were thus enabled to keep up their spirits, and gained by doing so the fairest chance of recovery.

Meanwhile, determined to prosecute the conquest of Syria, Buonaparte resolved to advance to Saint Jean d'Acre, so celebrated in the wars of Palestine. The Turkish Pacha, or governor of Syria, who, like others in his situation, accounted himself almost an independent sovereign, was Achmet, who, by his unrelenting cruelties and executions, had procured the terrible distinction of Djézzar, or the Butcher. Buonaparte addressed this formidable chief in two letters, offering his alliance, and threatening him with his vengeance if it should be rejected. To neither did the Pacha return any answer—in the second instance he put to death the messenger. The French general advanced against Acre, vowing revenge. There were, however, obstacles to the success of his enterprise, on which he had not calculated.

The Pacha had communicated the approach of Napoleon to Sir Sidney Smith, to whom had been committed the charge of assisting the Turks in their proposed expedition to Egypt, and who, for that purpose, was cruising in the Levant. He hastened to sail for Acre with the *Tigre* and *Theseus*, ships of the line, and arriving there two days ere the French made their appearance, contributed greatly to place the town, the fortifications of which were on the old Gothic plan, in a respectable state of defence.

Sir Sidney Smith, who so highly distinguished himself on this occasion, had been long celebrated for the most intrepid courage, and spirit of enterprise. His character was, besides, marked by those traits of enthusiasm at which cold and vulgar minds are apt to sneer, because incapable of understanding them; yet without which great and honourable actions have rarely been achieved. He had also a talent, uncommon among the English, that of acting easily with foreign, and especially with barbarous troops, and understanding how to make their efforts availing for the service of the common cause, though exerted in a manner different from those of civilized nations. This brave officer having been frequently intrusted with the charge of alarming the French coast, had been taken on one occasion, and, contrary to the law of nations, and out of a mean spirit of revenge, was imprisoned in the Temple, from which he was delivered by a daring stratagem, effected by the French royalist party. He had not been many hours at Acre, when Providence afforded him a distinguishing mark of favour. The *Thesous*, which had been detached to intercept any French vessels that might be attending on Buonaparte's march, detected a small flotilla stealing under Mount Carmel, and had the good fortune to make prize of seven out of nine of them. They were a convoy from Damietta, bound for Acre, having on board heavy cannon, platforms, ammunition, and other necessary articles. These cannon and military stores, destined to form the siege of Acre, became eminently useful in its defence, and the consequence of their capture was eventually decisive of the struggle. General Philippeaux, a

French royalist, and officer of engineers, immediately applied himself to place the cannon thus acquired, to the amount of betwixt thirty and forty, upon the walls which they had been intended to destroy. This officer, who had been Buonaparte's school-fellow, and the principal agent in delivering Sir Sidney Smith from prison, possessed rare talents in his profession. Thus strangely met under the walls of Acre, an English officer, late a prisoner in the Temple at Paris, and a French colonel of engineers, with the late general of the Army of Italy, the ancient companion of Philippeaux,* and about to become almost the personal enemy of Smith.

On the 17th March, the French came in sight of Acre, which is built on a peninsula advancing into the sea, and so conveniently situated that vessels can lie near the shore, and annoy with their fire whatever advances to assault the fortifications. Notwithstanding the presence of two British ships of war, and the disappointment concerning his battering cannon, which were now pointed against him from the ramparts, Buonaparte, with a characteristic perseverance which on such an occasion was pushed into obstinacy, refused to abandon his purpose, and proceeded to open trenches, although the guns which he had to place in them were only twelve pounders. The point of attack was a large tower which predominated over the rest of the fortifications. A mine at the same time was run under the extreme defences.

By the 28th March a breach was effected, the mine was sprung, and the French proceeded to the assault upon that day. They advanced at the charging step, under a murderous fire from the walls, but had the mortification to find a deep ditch betwixt them and the tower. They crossed it, nevertheless, by help of the scaling-ladders which they carried with them, and forced their way as far as the tower, from which it is said that the defenders, impressed by the fate of Jaffa, were beginning to fly. They were checked by the example of Djezzar himself, who fired his own pistols at the French, and upbraided the Moslems who were retreating from the walls. The defences were again manned; the French, unable to support the renewed fire, were checked and forced back; and the Turks falling upon them in their retreat with sabre in hand, killed a number of their best men, and Mailly, who commanded the party. Sorties were made from the place to destroy the French works; and although the cries with which the Turks carry on their military manœuvres gave the alarm to the enemy, yet, assisted by a detachment of British seamen, they did the French considerable damage, reconnoitred the mine which they were forming anew, and obtained the knowledge of its direction necessary to prepare a counter mine.

While the strife was thus fiercely maintained on both sides, with mutual loss and increased animosity, the besiegers were threatened with other dangers. An army of Moslem troops of various nations, but all actuated by the same religious zeal, had formed themselves in the mountains of Samaria, and uniting with them the warlike inhabitants of that country, now called Naplous, formed the plan of attacking the French army lying before Acre on one side, while Djezzar and his allies should assail them upon the other. Kleber, with his division, was despatched by Buonaparte to disperse this assemblage. But though he obtained considerable advantages over detached parties of the Syrian army, their strength was so disproportioned, that at last, while he held a position near Mount Tabor, with two or three thousand men, he was surrounded by about ten times his own number. But his general-in-chief was hastening to his assistance. Buonaparte left two divisions to keep the trenches before Acre, and penetrated into the country in three columns. Murat, at the head of a fourth,

* Philippeaux died during the siege, of a fever brought on by fatigue. Buonaparte spoke of him with more respect than he usually showed to those who had been successful in opposing him. One reason might be, that the merit given to Philippeaux was in some degree subtracted from Sir Sidney Smith. The former was a Frenchman, and dead—the latter alive, and an Englishman.

occupied the pass called Jacob's Bridge. The attack, made on various points, was everywhere successful. The camp of the Syrian army was taken; their defeat, almost their dispersion, was accomplished, while their scattered remains fled to Damascus. Buonaparte returned, crowned with laurels, to the siege of Acre.

Here, too, the arrival of thirty heavy pieces of cannon from Jaffa seemed to promise that success, which the French had as yet been unable to attain. It was about this time that, walking on the Mount which still retains the name of Richard Cœur de Lion, Buonaparte expressed himself to Murat in these terms, as he pointed to St Jean D'Acre:—"The fate of the East depends upon yonder petty town. Its conquest will ensure the main object of my expedition, and Damascus will be the first fruit of it."* Thus it would seem, that, while engaged in the enterprise, Buonaparte held the same language, which he did many years after its failure when at St Helena.

Repeated and desperate assaults proved, that the consequence which he attached to taking Acre was as great as his words expressed. The assailants suffered severely on these occasions, for they were exposed to the fire of two ravelins, or external fortifications, which had been constructed under Philippeaux's directions, and at the same time enfiladed by the fire of the British shipping. At length, employing to the uttermost the heavy artillery now in his possession, Buonaparte, in spite of a bloody and obstinate opposition, forced his way to the disputed tower, and made a lodgment on the second story. It afforded, however, no access to the town; and the troops remained there as in a *cul de sac*, the lodgment being covered from the English and Turkish fire by a work constructed partly of packs of cotton, partly of the dead bodies of the slain, built up along with them.

At this critical moment, a fleet, bearing reinforcements long hoped for and much needed, appeared in view of the garrison. They contained Turkish troops under the command of Hassan Bey. Yet near as they were, the danger was imminent that Acre might be taken ere they could land. To prevent such a misfortune, Sir Sidney Smith in person proceeded to the disputed tower, at the head of a body of British seamen, armed with pikes. They united themselves to a corps of brave Turks, who defended the breach rather with heavy stones than with other weapons. The heap of ruins which divided the contending parties served as a breast-work to both. The muzzles of the muskets touched each other, and the spear-heads of the standards were locked together. At this moment one of the Turkish regiments of Hassan's army, which had by this time landed, made a sortie upon the French; and though they were driven back, yet the diversion occasioned the besiegers to be forced from their lodgment.

Abandoning the ill-omened tower, which had cost the besiegers so many men, Buonaparte now turned his efforts towards a considerable breach that had been effected in the curtain, and which promised a more easy entrance. It proved, indeed, but too easy; for Djezzar Pacha opposed to the assault on this occasion a new mode of tactics. Confiding in his superior numbers, he suffered the French, who were commanded by the intrepid General Lannes, to surmount the breach without opposition, by which they penetrated into the body of the place. They had no sooner entered, than a numerous body of Turks mingled among them with loud shouts; and ere they had time or room to avail themselves of their discipline, brought them into that state of close fighting, where strength and agility are superior to every other acquirement. The Turks, wielding the sabre in one hand, and the poniard in the other, cut to pieces almost all the French who had entered. General Rambaud lay a headless corpse in the breach—Lannes was with difficulty brought off, severely wounded.

* Related by Miot, as communicated to him by Murat.

The Turks gave no quarter; and instantly cutting the heads off of those whom they slew, carried them to the Pacha, who sat in public distributing money to those who brought him these bloody trophies, which now lay piled in heaps around him. This was the sixth assault upon these tottering and blood-stained ramparts. "Victory," said Napoleon, "is to the most persevering;" and, contrary to the advice of Kleber, he resolved upon another and yet more desperate attack.

On the 21st May the final effort was made. The attack of the morning failed, and Colonel Veneux renewed it at midday. "Be assured," said he to Buonaparte, "Acre shall be yours to-night, or Veneux will die on the breach." He kept his word at the cost of his life. Bon was also slain, whose division had been the executioners of the garrison of Jaffa. The French now retreated, dispirited, and despairing of success. The contest had been carried on at half a musket shot distance; and the bodies of the dead lying around, putrified under the burning sun, and spread disease among the survivors. An attempt was made to establish a suspension of arms for removing this horrible annoyance. Miot says that the Pacha returned no answer to the proposal of the French. According to Sir Sidney Smith's official reports, the armistice for this humane purpose was actually agreed on, but broken off by the French firing upon those who were engaged in the melancholy office, and then rushing on to make their last unsuccessful charge and assault upon the breach. This would have been a crime so useless, and would have tended so much to the inconvenience of the French themselves, that we cannot help suspecting some misunderstanding had occurred, and that the interruption was under a wrong conception of the purpose of the working party.

This is the more probable, as Sir Sidney Smith, who reports the circumstance, was not at this time disposed to put the best construction on any action of Buonaparte's, who, on the other hand, regarded the British seaman with peculiar dislike, and even malignity. The cause of personal quarrel betwixt them was rather singular.

Buonaparte had addressed the subjects of Achmet Djezzar's pachalik, in terms inviting them to revolt, and join the French; yet was much offended when, imitating his own policy, the Pacha and Sir Sidney Smith caused letters to be sent into his camp before Acre, urging his soldiers to mutiny and desertion. Sir Sidney also published a proclamation to the Druses, and other inhabitants of the country, calling on them to trust the faith of a Christian knight, rather than that of an unprincipled renegado. Nettled at these insults, Buonaparte declared that the English commodore was mad; and, according to his account, Sir Sidney replied by sending him a challenge. The French general scornfully refused this invitation, unless the challenger would bring Marlborough to meet him, but offered to send one of his grenadiers to indulge the Englishman's desire of single combat. The good taste of the challenge may be doubted, if indeed such was ever sent; but the scorn of the reply ought to have been mitigated, considering it was addressed to one, in consequence of whose dauntless and determined opposition Buonaparte's favourite object had failed, and who was presently to compel him for the first time to an inglorious retreat.

Another calumny, circulated by Buonaparte against the English commodore, was, that Sir Sidney Smith had endeavoured to expose his French prisoners to the infection of the plague, by placing them in vessels where that dreadful contagion prevailed. This charge had no other foundation, than in Buonaparte's wish, by spreading such a scandal, to break off all communication between the commodore and the discontented of his own army. After the heat excited by their angry collision had long subsided, it is amusing to find Napoleon, when in the island of Saint Helena, declaring, that his opinion of Sir Sidney Smith was altered for the better, since he had become acquainted with the rest of his

countrymen, and that he now considered him as a worthy sort of man—for an Englishman.

The siege of Acre had now continued sixty days since the opening of the trenches. The besiegers had marched no less than eight times to the assault, while eleven desperate sallies were evidence of the obstinacy of the defence. Several of the best French generals were killed; among the rest Caffarelli,* for whom Buonaparte had particular esteem; and the army was greatly reduced by the sword and the plague, which raged at once among their devoted bands. Retreat became inevitable. Yet Buonaparte endeavoured to give it such a colouring as might make the measure seem voluntary. Sometimes he announced that his purpose of going to Acre was sufficiently accomplished when he had battered down the palace of the Pacha; at other times he affirmed he had left the whole town a heap of ruins; and finally, he informed the Directory that he could easily have taken the place, but the plague being raging within its walls, and it being impossible to prevent the troops from seizing on infected clothes for part of their booty, he had rather decline the capture of Acre, than run the risk of introducing this horrid malady among his soldiers. What his real feelings must have been, while covering his chagrin with such flimsy pretexts, may be conjectured from the following frank avowal to his attendants in Saint Helena. Speaking of the dependence of the most important affairs on the most trivial, he remarks, that the mistake of the captain of a frigate, who bore away, instead of forcing his passage to the place of his destination, had prevented the face of the world from being totally changed. "Acre," he said, "would otherwise have been taken—the French army would have flown to Damascus and Aleppo—in a twinkling of an eye they would have been on the Euphrates—the Syrian Christians would have joined us—the Druses, the Armenians would have united with us."—Some one replied, "we might have been reinforced to the number of a hundred thousand men."—"Say six hundred thousand," said the Emperor; "who can calculate the amount? I would have reached Constantinople and the Indies—I would have changed the face of the world."†

* Caffarelli was shot in the elbow, and died of the amputation of the limb. He had before lost a leg, which induced the French soldiers, who disliked him as one of the principal contrivers of the Egyptian expedition, to say, when they saw him hobble past, "He, at least, need care little about the matter—he is sure to have one foot in France." He had some days delirium before he died; but Count Las Casas reports, that whenever Buonaparte was announced, his presence—nay, his name alone—seemed to cure the wanderings of the patient's spirit, and that this phenomenon was renewed so often as the General made him a visit.

† Las Casas' *Journal de la Vie Privée, &c. de Napoleon*, tom. I. partie seconde, p. 384. The extravagance of Napoleon's plan unavoidably reminds us of the vanity of human wishes. The cause to which he ascribes it is the mistake of a captain of a frigate, who, instead of forcing his way to Acre, against the opposition of two ships of the line, was unfortunately taken by them. This is a mode of reasoning which Napoleon was very ready to adopt. The miscarriage of his plans was seldom imputed by him to the successful wisdom or valour of an enemy, but to some accidental circumstance, or blunder, which deranged the scheme which must otherwise have been infallible. Some of his best generals were of a different opinion, and considered the rashness of the attack upon Acre, as involving the certainty of failure. Kleber is reported to have said, that the Turks defended themselves with the skill of Christians, and that the French attacked like Turks.

CHAPTER XXX.

Discussion concerning the alleged Poisoning of the Sick in the Hospitals at Jaffa.—Napoleon acquitted of the Charge.—French Army re-enter Cairo on the 14th June.—Retrospect of what had taken place in Upper and Lower Egypt during his Absence.—Incursion of Murad Bey.—18,000 Turks occupy Aboukir—Attacked and defeated by Buonaparte—This Victory terminates Napoleon's Career in Egypt.—Views of his Situation there after that Battle.—Admiral Gantheaume receives Orders to make ready for Sea—On the 23d August, Napoleon embarks for France, leaving Kleber and Menou first and second in Command of the Army—Arrives in Ajaccio, in Corsica, on the 30th September, and lands at Frejus, in France, on the 9th October.

THE retreat from before Acre was conducted with equal skill and secrecy, though Buonaparte was compelled to leave behind his heavy cannon, which he either buried or threw into the sea. But by a rumour which long prevailed in the French army, he was alleged to have taken a far more extraordinary measure of preparation for retreat, by destroying with opium the sick in the hospitals, who could not march along with the army.

This transaction is said to have taken place under the following circumstances. The siege of Acre being raised on the 20th of May 1799, the French army retreated to Jaffa, where their military hospitals had been established during the siege. Upon the 27th, Buonaparte was under the necessity of continuing his retreat, and in the meantime such of the patients as were convalescent were sent forward on the road to Egypt, under the necessary precautions for their safety. There remained an indefinite number, reaching at the greatest computation to betwixt twenty and thirty, but stated by Buonaparte himself to be only seven, whose condition was desperate. Their disease was the plague, and to carry them onward, seemed to threaten the army with infection; while to leave them behind, was abandoning them to the cruelty of the Turks, by whom all stragglers and prisoners were cruelly murdered, often with protracted torture. It was on this occasion that Buonaparte submitted to Desgenettes, chief of the medical staff, the propriety of ending the victims' misery by a dose of opium. The physician answered, with the heroism belonging to his profession, that his art taught him how to cure men, not how to kill them.

The proposal was agreeable to Buonaparte's principles, who, advocating the legality of suicide, naturally might believe, that if a man has a right to relieve himself of intolerable evils by depriving himself of life, a general or a monarch may deal forth that measure to his soldiers or subjects, which he would think it advisable to act upon in his own case. It was consistent, also, with his character, rather to look at results than at the measures which were to produce them, and to consider in many cases the end as an excuse for the means. "I would have desired such a relief for myself in the same circumstances," he said to Mr Warden. To O'Meara he affirmed, "that he would have taken such a step even with respect to his own son." The fallacy of this reasoning is demonstrable; but Buonaparte was saved from acting on it by the resistance of Desgenettes. A rear-guard was left to protect these unhappy men; and the English found some of them alive, who, if Desgenettes had been more compliant, would have been poisoned by their physician. If Buonaparte was guilty of entertaining such a purpose, whether entertained from indifference to human life, or from wild and misdirected ideas of humanity, he met an appropriate punishment in the general belief which long subsisted, that the deed had been actually carried into execution, not in the persons of a few expiring wretches only, but upon several hundred men. Miot says the report was current in the French army,—Sir Robert Wilson found it credited among their officers, when they be-

came the English prisoners,—and Count Las Casas admits it was generally believed by the soldiers. But though popular credulity eagerly receives whatever stories are marked by the horrible and wonderful, history, on the contrary, demands direct evidence, and the existence of powerful motives, for whatever is beyond the ordinary bounds of credibility. The poisoning of five or six hundred men is neither easily managed nor easily concealed; and why should the French leader have had recourse to it, since, like many a retreating general before him, he had only to leave the patients for whom he had not the means of transportation? To poison the sick and helpless, must have destroyed his interest with the remainder of his soldiers; whereas, to have left them to their fate, was a matter too customary, and too much considered as a point of necessity, to create any discontent* among those, whose interest, as well as that of their general, consisted in moving on as fast as possible. Again, had such a horrible expedient been had recourse to, it could not have escaped the knowledge of Sir Sidney Smith, who would not have failed to give the horrid fact publicity, were it only to retaliate upon Buonaparte for the scandalous accusations which he had circulated against the English. But though he mentions various complaints which the prisoners made against their general, and though he states himself to have found seven men alive in the hospitals at Jaffa, (being apparently the very persons whom it had been proposed to despatch by opium,) he says not a word of what he would doubtless have told not unwillingly, had there been ground for believing it. Neither, among the numerous persons to whom the truth must be known, has any one come forward since Buonaparte's fall, who could give the least evidence to authenticate the report otherwise than as a rumour, that had sprung out of the unjustifiable proposal which had indeed been made by Buonaparte to Desgenettes, but never acted upon. The same patient and impartial investigation, therefore, which compels us to record that the massacre of the Turkish prisoners in cold blood is fully proved, induces us to declare, that the poisoning of the sick at Jaffa has been affirmed without sufficient evidence.

Buonaparte continued his retreat from Syria, annoyed by the natives, who harassed his march, and retaliating the injuries which he received, by plundering and burning the villages which lay in the course of his march. He left Jaffa on the 28th May, and upon the 14th June re-entered Cairo, with a reputation not so much increased by the victory at Mount Tabor, as diminished and sullied for the time by the retreat from Acre.

Lower Egypt, during the absence of Buonaparte, had remained undisturbed, unless by partial insurrections. In one of these an impostor personated that mysterious individual, the Imaum Mohadi, of whom the Orientals believe that he is not dead, but is destined to return and combat Antichrist, before the consummation of all things takes place. This pretender to supernatural power, as well as others who placed themselves at the head of insurrections without such high pretensions, was completely defeated; and the French showed the greatest severity in punishing their followers, and the country which had furnished them with partisans.

In Upper Egypt there had been more obstinate contention. Murad Bey, already mentioned as the ablest chief of the Mamelukes, had maintained himself in

* Miot gives a melancholy, but too true a picture, of the indifference with which soldiers, when on a retreat, regard the sufferings of those whose strength does not enable them to keep up with the march. He describes a man, affected by the fear of being left to the cruelties of the Turks, snatching up his knapsack, and staggering after the column to which he belonged, while his glazed eye, uncertain motion, and stumbling pace, excited the fear of some, and the ridicule of others. "His account is made up," said one of his comrades, as he reeled about amongst them like a drunkard. "He will not make a long march of it," said another. And when, after more than one fall, he at length became unable to rise, the observation, that "he had taken up his quarters," was all the moan which it was thought necessary to make. It is in these cases, as Miot justly observes, that indifference and selfishness become universal; and he that would be comfortable must manage to rely on his own exertions, and, above all, to remain in good health.

that country with a degree of boldness and sagacity, which gave the French much trouble. His fine force of cavalry enabled him to advance or retreat at pleasure, and his perfect acquaintance with the country added much to his advantage.

Dessaix, sent against Murad after the battle of the Pyramids, had again defeated the Mameluke chief at Sedinan, where was once more made evident the superiority of European discipline over the valour of the irregular cavalry of the East. Still the destruction of the enterprising Bey was far from complete. Reinforced by a body of cavalry, Dessaix, in the month of December 1798, again attacked him, and, after a number of encounters, terminating generally to the advantage of the French, the remaining Mamelukes, with their allies the Arabs, were at length compelled to take shelter in the Desert. Egypt seemed entirely at the command of the French; and Cosseir, a sea-port on the Red Sea, had been taken possession of by a flotilla, fitted out to command that gulf.

Three or four weeks after Buonaparte's return from Syria, this flattering state of tranquillity seemed on the point of being disturbed. Murad Bey, re-entering Upper Egypt with his Mamelukes and allies, descended the Nile in two bodies, one occupying each bank of the river. Ibrahim Bey, formerly his partner in the government of Egypt, made a corresponding movement towards the frontiers of Syria, as if to communicate with the right-hand division of Murad's army. La Grange was despatched against the Mamelukes who occupied the right bank, while Murat marched against those who, under the Bey himself, were descending the Nile. The French were entertained at the idea of the two Murats, as they termed them, from the similarity of their names, meeting and encountering each other; but the Mameluke Murad retreated before *Le Beau Sabreur*—the handsome swordsman—of the French army.

Meantime the cause of this incursion was explained by the appearance of a Turkish fleet off Alexandria, who disembarked eighteen thousand men at Aboukir. This Turkish army possessed themselves of the fort, and proceeded to fortify themselves, expecting the arrival of the Mamelukes, according to the plan which had previously been adjusted for expelling the French from Egypt. This news reached Buonaparte near the Pyramids, to which he had advanced, in order to ensure the destruction of Murad Bey. The arrival of the Turks instantly recalled him to Alexandria, whence he marched to Aboukir to repel the invaders. He joined his army, which had assembled from all points within a short distance of the Turkish camp, and was employed late in the night making preparations for the battle on the next morning. Murat was alone with Buonaparte, when the last suddenly made the oracular declaration, "Go how it will, this battle will decide the fate of the world."

"The fate of this army, at least," replied Murat, who did not comprehend Buonaparte's secret meaning. "But the Turks are without horse, and if ever infantry were charged to the teeth by cavalry, they shall be so charged to-morrow by mine."

Napoleon's meaning, however, referred not to Egypt alone, but to Europe; to which he probably already meditated an unexpected return, which must have been prevented had he not succeeded in obtaining the most complete triumph over the Turks. The leaving his Egyptian army, a dubious step at best, would have been altogether indefensible had there remained an enemy in their front.

Next morning, being the 25th July, Buonaparte commenced an attack on the advanced posts of the enemy, and succeeded in driving them in upon the main body, which was commanded by Seid Mustapha Pacha. In their first attack, the French were eminently successful, and pursued the fugitive Turks to their entrenchments, doing great execution. But when the batteries opened upon them from the trenches, while they were at the same time exposed to the fire from the gun-boats in the bay, their impetuosity was checked, and the Turks

sallying out upon them with their muskets slung at their backs, made such havoc among the French with their sabres, poniards, and pistols, as compelled them to retreat in their turn. The advantage was lost by the eagerness of the barbarians to possess themselves of the heads of their fallen enemies, for which they receive a certain reward. They threw themselves confusedly out of the entrenchments to obtain these bloody testimonials, and were in considerable disorder, when the French suddenly rallied, charged them with great fury, drove them back into the works, and scaled the ramparts along with them.

Murat had made good his promise of the preceding evening, and had been ever in the front of the battle. When the French had surmounted the entrenchments, he formed a column which reversed the position of the Turks, and pressing them with the bayonet, threw them into utter and inextricable confusion. Fired upon and attacked on every point, they became, instead of an army, a confused rabble, who, in the impetuosity of animal terror, threw themselves by hundreds and by thousands into the sea, which at once seemed covered with turbans. It was no longer a battle, but a masacre; and it was only when wearied with slaughter that quarter was given to about six thousand men—the rest of the Turkish army, originally consisting of eighteen thousand, perished on the field or in the waves. Mustapha Pacha was taken, and carried in triumph before Buonaparte. The haughty Turk had not lost his pride with his fortunes. “I will take care to inform the Sultan,” said the victor, meaning to be courteous, “of the courage you displayed in this battle, though it has been your mishap to lose it.”

“Thou may'st save thyself the trouble,” answered the prisoner haughtily; “my master knows me better than thou canst.”

Buonaparte returned in triumph to Cairo on the 9th August; having, however, as he continued to represent himself friendly to the Porte, previously set on foot a negotiation for liberation of the Turkish prisoners.

This splendid and most decisive victory of Aboukir concluded Napoleon's career in the East. It was imperiously necessary, ere he could have ventured to quit the command of his army, with the hope of preserving his credit with the public; and it enabled him to plead that he left Egypt for the time in absolute security.

His military views had indeed been uniformly successful; and Egypt was under the dominion of France as completely as the sword could subject it. For two years afterwards, like the strong man in the parable, they kept the house which they had won, until there came in a stronger, by whom they were finally and forcibly expelled.

But though the victory over the Turks afforded the French for the time undisturbed possession of Egypt, the situation of Buonaparte no longer permitted him those brilliant and immense prospects, in which his imagination loved to luxuriate. His troops were considerably weakened, and the miscarriage at Acre dwelt on the recollection of the survivors. The march upon Constantinople was now an impossibility, that to India an empty dream. To establish a French colony in Egypt, of which Buonaparte sometimes talked, and to restore the Indian traffic to the shores of the Red Sea, thus sapping the sources of British prosperity in India, was a work for the time of peace, when the necessary communication was not impeded by the naval superiority of England. The French General had established, indeed, a Chamber of Commerce; but what commerce could take place from a closely blockaded harbour? Indeed, even in a more propitious season, the establishment of a pacific colony was no task for the ardent and warlike Napoleon, who, although his active spirit was prompt in striking out commercial schemes, was not possessed of the patience or steadiness necessary to carry them to success. It follows, that if he remained in Egypt, his residence there must have resembled the situation of a governor in a large city, threatened indeed, but as yet in no danger of being besieged,

where the only fame which can be acquired is that due to prudent and patient vigilance. This would be a post which no young or ambitious soldier would covet, providing he had the choice of being engaged in more active service. On the other hand, from events which we shall endeavour to trace in the next chapter, there opened a scene of ambition in France, which permitted an almost boundless extent of hopes and wishes. Thus Napoleon had the choice either of becoming a candidate for one of the greatest prizes which the world afforded—the supreme authority in that fine country—or of remaining the governor of a defensive army in Egypt, waiting the arrival of some new invaders—English, Russians, or Turks, to dispute his conquest with him. Had he chosen this latter line of conduct, he might have soon found himself the vassal of Moreau, or some other military adventurer, (perhaps from his own Italian army,) who, venturing on the course from which he had himself withdrawn, had attained to the government of France, and might soon have been issuing orders from the Luxembourg or the Tuilleries to General Buonaparte, in the style of a sovereign to his subject.

There remained to be separated those strong ties, which were formed betwixt Napoleon and the army which he had so often led to victory, and who unquestionably thought he had cast his lot to live or die with them. But undoubtedly he might palliate his departure by the consideration, that he left them victorious over their boastful enemy, and without the chance of being speedily summoned to the field; and we can see no reason for supposing, as has been alleged, that anything like fear had an influence in inducing Napoleon's desertion, as it has been termed, of his army. We cannot, indeed, give him credit for the absolute and pure desire of serving and saving France, which is claimed by his more devoted adherents, as the sole motive of his return to Europe; but we have no doubt that some feelings of this kind—to which, as we are powerful in deceiving ourselves, he himself might afford more weight than they deserved—mingled with his more selfish hopes, and that he took this important step with the desire of serving his country, as well as of advancing his own interest. Nor should it be forgotten, that the welfare even of the Egyptian army, as well as his own ambitious views, required that he should try his fortune at Paris. If he did not personally exert himself there, it seemed highly probable some revolution might take place, in which one of the consequences might be, that the victors of Egypt, deserted by their countrymen, should be compelled to lay down their arms.

The circumstances in which Buonaparte's resolution is said to have originated, as related by himself, were singularly fortuitous. Some intercourse took place with the Turkish fleet, in consequence of his sending the wounded Turks on board, and Sir Sidney Smith, by way of taunting the French general with the successes of the Russians in Italy, sent him a set of newspapers containing an account of Suwarrow's victories, and a deplorable view of the French affairs on the continent. If we may trust other authorities, however, to be quoted in their proper place, he already knew the state of affairs, both in Italy and France, by his own secret correspondence with Paris, informing him not only of the military reverses which the armies of the latter country had sustained, but of the state of parties, and of the public mind,—intelligence of greater utility and accuracy than could have been communicated by the English newspapers.

Howsoever his information was derived, Buonaparte lost no time in acting upon it, with all the secrecy which a matter of such importance required. Admiral Gantheaume, who had been with the army ever since the destruction of the fleet, received the General's orders to make ready for sea, with all possible despatch, two frigates then lying in the harbour of Alexandria.

Meantime, determined to preserve his credit with the Institute, and to bring evidence of what he had done for the cause of science, Buonaparte commanded Mongé, who is said to have suggested the expedition, and the accomplished

Denon, who became its historian, with Berthollet, to prepare to accompany him to Alexandria. Of military chiefs, he selected the Generals Berthier, Murat, Lannes, Marmont, Dessaix, Andreossi, and Bessieres, the best and most attached of his officers. He left Cairo as soon as he heard the frigates were ready and the sea open, making a visit to the Delta the pretext of his tour. Kleber and Menou, whom he meant to leave first and second in command, were appointed to meet him at Alexandria. But he had an interview with the latter only.

Kleber, an excellent soldier, and a man of considerable parts, was much displeased at the hasty and disordered manner in which the command of an important province, and a diminished army, were thrust upon him, and remonstrated, in a letter to the Directory, upon the several points of the public service, which, by his conduct on this occasion, Buonaparte had neglected or endangered. Napoleon afterwards laboured hard to answer the accusations which these remonstrances implied, and to prove, that, in leaving the Egyptian army, he had no intention of abandoning it; on the contrary, that he intended either to return in person, or to send powerful succours. He blamed Gantheaume, at a later period, for not having made his way from Toulon to Alexandria, with reinforcements and supplies. But Buonaparte, slow to see what contradicted a favourite project, could never be made to believe, unless when in the very act of experiencing it, that the superiority of the British naval power depends upon circumstances totally different from those which can be removed by equal courage, or even equal skill, on the part of the French naval officers, and that until it be removed, it will be at great hazard that France shall ever attempt to retain a province so distant as Egypt.

Napoleon left behind him a short proclamation, apprising the army that news of importance from France had recalled him to Europe, but that they should soon hear tidings of him. He exhorted them in the meantime to have confidence in their new commander, who possessed, he said, his good opinion, and that of the government, and in these terms he bade them farewell. Two frigates, *La Muiron*, and *La Carere*, being ready for sea, the General embarked from an unfrequented part of the beach on the 23d August. Menou, who had met him there, came to Denon and others, who had attended the rendezvous without knowing exactly its purpose, as they were gazing in surprise at the unusual sight of two French frigates ready to put to sea, and informed them with agitation that Buonaparte waited for them. They followed as in a dream; but Denon had already secured that mass of measurements, drawings, manuscripts, and objects of antiquarian and scientific curiosity, which afterwards enabled him to complete the splendid work, which now contains the only permanent or useful fruits of the memorable expedition to Egypt.

Ere the frigates were far from land, they were reconnoitred by an English corvette, a circumstance which seemed of evil augury. Buonaparte assured his companions, by his usual allusions to his own destiny. "We will arrive safe," he said; "Fortune will never abandon us—we will arrive safe in despite of the enemy."

To avoid the English cruisers, the vessels coasted the shores of Africa, and the wind was so contrary, that they made but an hundred leagues in twenty days. During this time Buonaparte studied alternately the Bible and the Koran, more solicitous, it seemed, about the history of the countries which he had left behind, than the part which he was to play in that to which he was hastening. At length they ventured to stand northward, and on the 30th September, they entered, by singular chance, the port of Ajaccio in Corsica, and Buonaparte found himself near his native city.* On the 7th October, they again put

* The natives came off in numbers to see their illustrious countryman, but as he does not appear to have landed, his transient presence in the harbour formed no exception to what is said in p. 230, of his not revisiting his own country.

to sea, but, upon approaching the French coast, they found themselves in the neighbourhood of a squadron of English men-of-war. The admiral would have tacked about, to return to Corsica. "To do so," said Buonaparte, "would be to take the road to England—I am seeking that to France." He probably meant that the manœuvre would attract the attention of the English. They kept on their course; but the peril of being captured seemed so imminent, that, though still several leagues from the shore, Gantheaume proposed to man his long-boat, in order that the General might attempt his escape in her. Buonaparte observed, that that measure might be deferred till the case was more desperate.

At length, they passed, unsuspected and unquestioned, through the hostile squadron, and on the 9th October, at ten in the morning, he on whose fate the world so long seemed to depend, landed at St Rapheau, near Frejus. He had departed at the head of a powerful fleet, and a victorious army, on an expedition designed to alter the destinies of the most ancient nations of the world. The result had been far from commensurate to the means employed—The fleet had perished—the army was blockaded in a distant province, when their arms were most necessary at home. He returned clandestinely, and almost alone; yet Providence designed that, in this apparently deserted condition, he should be the instrument of more extensive and more astonishing changes, than the efforts of the greatest conquerors had ever before been able to effect upon the civilized world.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Retrospect of Public Events since the departure of Napoleon for Egypt.—Invasion and Conquest of Switzerland.—Seizure of Turin.—Expulsion of the Pope.—The Neapolitans declare War against France—are defeated—and the French enter Naples.—Disgraceful Avarice exhibited by the Directory—particularly in their Negotiations with the United States of America—Are unsuccessful, and their shame made public.—Russia comes forward in the general Cause—Her Strength and Resources.—Reverses of the French in Italy, and on the Rhine.—Insurrections in Belgium and Holland against the French.—Anglo-Russian Expedition sent to Holland.—The Chouans again in the field.—Great and universal Unpopularity of the Directory.—State of Parties in France.—Law of Hostages.—Abbe Sieyès becomes one of the Directory—His Character and Genius.—Description of the Constitution proposed by him for the Year Three.—Ducos, Gohier, and Moutins, also introduced into the Directory.—Family of Napoleon strive to keep him in the Recollection of the People.—Favourable Change in the French Affairs.—Holland evacuated by the Anglo-Russian Army.—Korsakow defeated by Massena—and Suwarrow retreats before Lecourbe.

WHEN Napoleon accepted what was to be considered as a doom of honourable banishment, in the command of the Egyptian expedition, he answered to those friends who advised him rather to stay and assert a pre-eminent station in the government at home, "that the fruit was not ripe." The seventeen months, or thereabouts, of his absence, had done much to complete the maturity which was formerly imperfect. The French government had ceased to be invariably victorious, and at times had suffered internal changes, which, instead of restoring the national confidence, had only induced a general expectation of some farther and decisive revolution, that should for ever overthrow the Directorial system.

When Buonaparte sailed for Egypt, he left France at peace with Austria,

and those negotiations proceeding at Radstadt, which no one then doubted would settle on a pacific footing the affairs of Germany. England alone remained hostile to France; but the former being victorious on the sea, and the latter upon the land, it seemed as if the war must languish and die of itself unless there had been a third element, of which the rivals might have disputed the possession. But though the interests of France, as well as of humanity, peremptorily demanded peace, her rulers, feeling that their own tottering condition would be rendered still more precarious by the disbanding their numerous armies, resolved to continue the war in a new quarter.

Under the most flimsy and injurious pretexts, they attacked the neutral states of Switzerland, so eminent for their moderation; and the French troops, levied in the name of Freedom, were sent to assail that country which had been so long her mountain fortress. The ancient valour of the Switzers was unable to defend them against the new discoveries in the art of war, by which the strongest defiles can be turned, and therefore rendered indefensible. They fought with their ancient courage, particularly the natives of the mountain cantons, and only gave way before numbers and discipline. But these gallant mountaineers sacrificed more than thrice their own amount, ere they fell in their ranks, as became the countrymen of William Tell. The French affected to give the Swiss a constitution on the model of their own, but this was a mere farce. The arsenals, fortresses, and treasures of the cantons, were seized without scruple or apology, and the Swiss were treated in all respects like a conquered nation. The fate of this ancient and unoffending people excited deep and general fear and detestation, and tended more perhaps than any other event, to raise the animosity of Europe in general against France, as a country which had now plainly shown, that her ambition could be bounded by no consideration of justice or international law.

The King of Sardinia, who had first acknowledged the superiority of Buonaparte, and purchased his existence as a continental sovereign, by surrendering all his fortresses to France, and permitting her troops to march through his country as their own, had surely some claim to forbearance; but now, without even a pretext for such violence, the French seized upon Turin, the capital of this their vassal monarch, and upon all his continental dominions, sending him and his family to the island of Sardinia.

Another victim there was of the French grasping ambition, in whose fate the Catholic world was deeply interested. We have seen already, that Buonaparte, though he despoiled the Pope of power and treasure, judged it more prudent to permit him to subsist as a petty prince, than, by depriving him of all temporal authority, to drive him to desperation, and oblige him to use against the Republic those spiritual weapons, to which the public opinion of Catholic countries still assigned strength. But the Directory were of a different opinion; and though the Pope had submitted passively to every demand which had been made by the French ambassador, however inconsistent with the treaty of Tolentino, the Directory, with the usual policy of their nation, privately encouraged a party in Rome which desired a revolution. These conspirators arose in arms, and, when dispersed by the guards, fled towards the hotel of Joseph Buonaparte, then the ambassador of the French to the Pope. In the scuffle which ensued, the ambassador was insulted, his life endangered, and General Duphot actually killed by his side. This outrage of course sealed the fall of the Pope, which had probably long been determined on. Expelled from his dominions, the aged Pius VI. retired to Sienna, more the object of respect and veneration in his condition of a dethroned exile, than when holding the semblance of authority by permission of France. In place of the Pontiff's government arose the shadow of a mighty name, The Roman Republic. But the Gauls were in possession of the Capitol, nor did the ancient recollections, connected with the title of the

new commonwealth, procure for the Romans more independent authority than was possessed by any of the other ephemeral republican governments.

In the fall of the Pope, and the occupation of the Roman territories by a French army, the King of Naples saw the nation whom he feared and hated, and by whom he knew he was considered as a desirable subject of plunder, approach his frontiers, and become his neighbours. War he perceived was unavoidable; and he formed the resolution to be the first in declaring it. The victory of Nelson, and the interest which that distinguished hero acquired at what might be called a female court, with the laurels of the Nile fresh upon his brow, confirmed the Neapolitan government in the resolution. Mack, an Austrian general, who had got the reputation of a great tactician and a gallant soldier, was sent by the Emperor to discipline and command the Neapolitan army. Nelson's falcon eye measured the man's worth at once. "General Mack," said he, "cannot move without five carriages—I have formed my opinion—I heartily pray I may be mistaken." He was *not* mistaken. The Neapolitan army marched to Rome, was encountered by the French, fought just long enough to lose about forty men, then fled, abandoning guns, baggage, arms, and everything besides. "The Neapolitan officers did not lose much honour," said Nelson, "for God knows they had little to lose—but they lost what they had." The prescient eye, which was as accurate by land as by sea, had also foreseen the instant advance of the French to Naples. It took place accordingly, but not unresisted. The naked rabble, called Lazzaroni, showed the most desperate courage. They attacked the French ere they came to the city; and notwithstanding a murderous defeat, they held out Naples for two days with their irregular musketry only, against regular forces amply supplied with artillery. What can we say of a country, where the rabble are courageous and the soldiers cowards? what, unless that the higher classes, from whom the officers are chosen, must be the parties to be censured.

The royal family fled to Sicily; and in Naples a new classical-sounding government was created at the command of the French general,—The Parthenopean Republic. The French were now possessed of all Italy, excepting Tuscany, and that was exempted from their authority in name only, and not in effect.

The French people, notwithstanding the success of these several undertakings, were not deceived or flattered by them in a degree equal to what probably their rulers expected. Their vanity was alarmed at the meanness of the motives which the Directory exhibited on almost every occasion. Even the dazzling pride of conquest was sullied by the mercenary views with which war was undertaken. On one occasion the veil was raised, and all Frenchmen who had feelings of decency, not to say of probity or honour, remaining, must have held themselves disgraced by the venal character of their government.

Some disputes existing between France and the United States of America, commissioners were sent by the latter country to Paris, to endeavour to restore a good understanding. They were not publicly acknowledged by France in the character of ambassadors; but were distinctly given to understand, that they could only be permitted to treat, on condition that the States of America should lend to the Republic the sum of a million sterling; to which was added, the unblushing demand of fifty thousand pounds, as a *douceur*, for the private pocket of the Directors. The astonishment of the envoys was extreme at this curious diplomatic proposal, and they could hardly credit their ears when they heard it repeatedly and grossly urged. "The essential part of the treaty," said one of the French agents, "is, *il faut de l'argent—il faut beaucoup d'argent*;" and to render the matter palatable, he told the Americans of other countries which had paid large sums to obtain peace, and reminded them of the irresistible power of France. The Transatlantic republicans, unmoved by these arguments, stoutly answered, "That it belonged only to petty states to purchase

independence by payment of tribute—that America was willing and able to protect herself by arms, and would not purchase with money what she possessed by her powerful means of self-defence.” They added, “that they had no power whatever to enter into any engagements concerning a loan.”

The agents of France lowered their tone so far as to say, that if the commissioners would pay something in the way of fees, they might be permitted to remain in Paris, whilst one of their number returned to America to obtain instructions from their government; but not even to that modification of bribery would the Americans listen. They would not, according to the expression used in incendiary letters, “put five pounds in a certain place.” The treaty became public, to the scandal alike of France and of Europe, which joined in regarding a government that made war on such base principles, as standing, in comparison to those who warred in the spirit of conquest, in the relation of footpads to highwaymen. The only attempt made by Talleyrand towards explanation of this singular transaction, was a shuffling denial of the fact, which he strengthened by an insinuation, that the statement of the American envoys was a weak invention, suggested to them by the English.

Not to multiply instances, the rapacity and domineering insolence with which the Directory conducted themselves towards the new republics, who were at every moment made sensible of their total dependence on the Great Nation—the merciless exactions which they imposed, together with the rapacious speculations of many of their generals and agents, made them lose interest almost as fast as they could acquire territory. Their fair pretexts of extending freedom, and the benefits of a liberal government, to states which had been oppressed by the old feudal institutions, were now valued at no more than their worth; and it was seen, that the only equality which republican France extended to the conquered countries, was to render all classes alike degraded and impoverished. Thus, the successes which we have hastily enumerated rather endangered than strengthened the empire of France, as they rendered her ambition the object of fear and suspicion to all Europe. The Catholic nations beheld the degradation of the supreme Pontiff with abhorrence—every king in Europe feared a similar fate with the sovereigns of Sardinia and Naples—and, after the fate of Switzerland, no people could rely upon a peaceful, unoffending, and strictly neutral character, as ground sufficient to exempt them from French aggression. Thus a general dread and dislike prepared for a new coalition against France, in which Russia, for the first time, was to become an active co-operator.

The troops of this powerful empire were eminently qualified for encountering with the French; for, added to their hardihood, courage, and discipline, they had a national character—a distinction less known to the Germans, whose subdivision into different states, often at war with each other, has in some degree diminished their natural spirit of patriotism. Accustomed also to warfare on a great scale, and to encounter such an enemy as the Turk, the Russians, while they understood the modern system of tactics, were less servilely bigoted to it than the Austrians. Their ideas more readily went back to the natural and primitive character of war, and they were better prepared either to depart from strict technical rules themselves, or to see them departed from, and calculate the results. These new enemies of France, moreover, were full of confidence in their own character, and unchecked in their military enthusiasm by the frequent recollections of defeat, which clouded the spirit of the Austrians. Above all, the Russians had the advantage of being commanded by Suwarrow, one of the most extraordinary men of his time, who, possessed of the most profound military sagacity, assumed the external appearance of fanatical enthusiasm, as in society he often concealed his perfect knowledge of good breeding under the show of extravagant buffoonery. These peculiarities, which would not have succeeded with a French or English army, gained for him an unbounded con-

fidence among his countrymen, who considered his eccentric conduct, followed, as it almost always was, by brilliant success, as the result of something which approached to inspiration.

The united forces of Austria and Russia, chiefly under the command of this singular character, succeeded, in a long train of bloody battles, to retake and re-occupy those States in the north of Italy, which had been conquered in Buonaparte's first campaigns. It was in vain that Macdonald, whose name stood as high among the Republican generals, as his character for honour and rectitude among French statesmen, marched from Naples, traversing the whole length of Italy, to arrest the victorious progress of the allies. After a train of stubborn fighting, it was only by displaying great military talent that he could extricate the remains of his army. At length the decisive and desperate battle of Novi seemed to exclude the French from the possession of those fair Italian provinces, which had been acquired by such expense of life.

On the Rhine, though her defeats were not of such a decided character, France also lost reputation and territory. Jourdan proved no match for the Archduke Charles, who, having no longer Buonaparte to encounter, asserted his former superiority over inferior French generals. His Royal Highness finally compelled the French to recross the Rhine, while the Austrian generals Bellegarde and Hotze, supported by a Russian division under Korsakow, advanced to the line of the Limmat, near Zurich, and waited the junction of Suwarrow to occupy Switzerland, and even to menace France, who, in a great measure despoiled of her foreign conquests, had now reason to apprehend the invasion of her own territory.

In the Netherlands, the French interest seemed equally insecure. Insurrections had already taken place in what they called Belgium, and it seemed that the natives of these populous districts desired but opportunity and encouragement for a general revolt. Holland, through all its provinces, was equally disaffected; and the reports from that country encouraged England to send to the coast an expedition, consisting of British and Russian forces, to which two divisions of the Dutch fleet delivered up their vessels, hoisting at the same time the colours of the Stadtholder. Here was another risk of an imminent and pressing description, which menaced France and its Directorial government.

It remains to be added to the tale of these foreign calamities, that the Chouans, or Royalists of Bretagne, were again in the field with a number of bands, amounting, it is said, to forty thousand men in all. They had gained several successes, and, though falling short of the chivalrous spirit of the Vendéans, and having no general equal in talents to Charette, were nevertheless sufficiently brave and well commanded, to become extremely formidable, and threaten a renewal of all the evils which had been occasioned by the former civil war.

Amidst these lowering appearances, the dislike and disrespect with which the Directors were regarded, occasioned their being loaded with every species of accusation by the public. It was not forgotten that it was the jealousy of Barras, Reubel, and the other Directors, which had banished from France the most successful of her generals, at the head of a gallant army, who were now needed to defend the provinces which their valour had gained. The battle of Aboukir, while it annihilated their fleet, had insulated the land forces, who, now cut off from all communication with their mother country, and shut up in an insalubrious province, daily wasted in encounters with the barbarous tribes that valour, and those lives, which, hazarded on the frontiers of France, might have restored victory to their standards.

To these upbraiding complaints, and general accusations of incapacity, as well as of peculation, the Directors had little to answer. What was a still greater deficiency, they had no party to appeal to, by whom their cause, right or wrong, might have been advocated with the stanch adherence of par-

tisans. They had undergone, as we shall presently show, various changes in their own body, but without any alteration in their principles of administration, which still rested on the principle of *Bascule*, or see-saw,* as it is called in English; the attempt, in short, to govern two contending factions in the state, by balancing the one against the other, without adhering to either. In consequence of this mean and temporizing policy, which is always that of weak minds, the measures of the government were considered, not with reference to the general welfare of the state, but as they should have effect upon one or other of the parties by which it was divided. It followed also, that having no certain path and plan, but regulating their movements upon the wish to maintain an equality between the factions, in order that they might preserve their authority over both, the Directors had no personal followers or supporters, save that most sordid class, who regulate their politics on their interest, and who, though faithful adherents of every settled administration, perceive, by instinctive sagacity, the moment that their patrons are about to lose their offices, and desert their cause on such occasions with all convenient speed.

Yet the Directors, had they been men of talent, integrity, and character—above all, had they been united among themselves, and agreed on one steady course of policy, might have governed France with little difficulty. The great body of the nation were exhausted by the previous fury of the revolutionary movements, had supped full with politics, and were much disposed to sit down contented under any government which promised protection for life and property. Even the factions had lost their energy. Those who inclined to a monarchical form, were many of them become indifferent by whom the sceptre was wielded, providing that species of government, supposed by them most suitable to the habits and character of the French, should be again adopted. Many who were of this opinion saw great objection to the restoration of the Bourbons, for fear that along with their right might revive all those oppressive feudal claims which the Revolution had swept away, as well as the pretensions of the emigrants to resume their property. Those who entertained such sentiments were called *Moderés*. The ancient blood-red Jacobins could hardly be said to exist. The nation had had a surfeit of blood, and all parties looked back with disgust on the days of Robespierre. But there existed a kind of white Jacobins; men who were desirous to retain a large proportion of democratical principle in the constitution, either that they might not renounce the classical name of a Republic, or because they confided in their own talents, to “wield at will the fierce democracy;” or because they really believed that a potent infusion of such a spirit in the forms of government, was necessary for the preservation of liberty. This party was greatly inferior in numbers to the others; and they had lost their authority over the populace, by means of which they had achieved such changes during the early periods of the Revolution. But they were bold, enterprising, active; and their chiefs, assuming at first the name of the Pantheon, afterwards of the Manege Club, formed a party in the state, which, from the character of the leaders, gave great subject of jealousy to the Directory.

The rapacity and insolent bearing of the French government having, as we have seen, provoked a new war with Austria and Russia, the means to which the Directors had recourse for maintaining it were a forced loan imposed on the wealthy, which gave alarm to property, and a conscription of two hundred thousand men, which was alike distressing to poor and rich. Both measures had been submitted to during the Reign of Terror; but then a murmur cost the complainer his head. The Directory had no such summary mode of settling grievances. These two last inflictions greatly inflamed the public discontent.

* The term, it is scarcely necessary to say, is derived from the childish amusement, where two boys swing at the opposite ends of a plank, moving up and down, in what Dr Johnson calls “a reciprocating motion,” while a third urchin, placed on the centre of motion, regulates their movements.

To meet the general tendency to insurrection, they had recourse to a measure equally harsh and unpopular. It was called the Law of Hostages, by which the unoffending relatives of emigrants, or royalists, supposed to be in arms, were thrown into prison, and rendered responsible for the acts of their connexions. This unjust law filled the prisons with women, old men, and children,—victims of a government which, because it was not strong enough to subdue insurrection by direct force, visited the consequences of its own weakness on age, childhood, and helpless females.

Meantime the dissensions among the Directors themselves, which continued to increase, led to various changes within their own body. When Buonaparte left Europe, the Directory consisted of Barras, Reubel, Treilhard, Merlin, Reveilliere-Lepaux. The opposition attacked them with so much fury in the Legislative Assemblies, Boulay de la Meurthe, Lucien Buonaparte, François, and other men of talent leading the way, that at length the Directors appear to have become afraid of being made personally responsible by impeachment for the peculations of their agents, as well as for the result of the insolences by which they had exasperated the friends and allies of France. Reubel, he whose character for talent and integrity stood most fair with the public, was removed from office by the lot which announced him as the Director who was to retire. It has been said some art was used to guide fortune on this occasion. His name in the list was succeeded by one celebrated in the Revolution; that of the Abbe Sieyes.

This remarkable statesman had acquired a high reputation, not only by the acuteness of his metaphysical talent, but by a species of mystery in which he involved himself and his opinions. He was certainly possessed of great knowledge and experience in the affairs of France, was an adept in the composition of new constitutions of all kinds, and had got a high character, as possessed of secrets peculiarly his own, for conducting the vessel of the State amidst the storms of Revolution. The Abbe in fact managed his political reputation as a prudent trader does his stock; and by shunning to venture on anything which could in any great degree peril his credit, he extended it in the public opinion, perhaps much farther than his parts justified. A temper less daring in action than bold in metaphysical speculation, and a considerable regard for his own personal safety, accorded well with his affected air of mystery and reserve. In the National Assembly he had made a great impression, by his pamphlet explaining the nature of the Third Estate; and he had the principal part in procuring the union of the three separate Estates into the National Assembly. A flaming patriot in 1792-3, he voted for the death of the unfortunate Louis; and, as was reported, with brutal levity, using the celebrated expression, "*Mort sans phrase.*" He was no less distinguished for bringing forward the important measure for dividing France into departments, and thus blending together and confounding all the ancient distinctions of provinces. After this period he became passive, and was little heard of during the Reign of Terror; for he followed the maxim of Pythagoras, and worshipped the Echo (only found in secret and solitary places,) when he heard the tempest blow hard.

After the revolution of 9th Thermidor, Sieyes came in with the moderate party, and had the merit to propose the recall of the members who had been forcibly expelled by the Jacobin faction on the fall of the Girondists. He was one of the committee of eleven, to whom was committed the charge of forming the new constitution, afterwards called that of the year Three. This great metaphysical philosopher and politician showed little desire to share with any colleagues the toil and honour of a task to which he esteemed himself exclusively competent; and he produced, accordingly, a model entirely of his own composition, very ingenious, and evincing a wonderfully intimate acquaintance with political doctrines, together with a multitude of nice balances, capacities, and disqualifications, so constituted as to be checks on each other. As strongly

characteristic of the genius of the man, we shall here give an account of his great work.

His plan provided that the constitution, with its powers of judicature and of administration, should emanate from the people; but lest, like that unnatural parent the sow, the people should devour their own nine farrow, the functionaries thus invested with power were to be placed, when created, out of the reach of the parents who had given them birth. The mode in which it was proposed to effect this, was both singular and ingenious. The office-bearers were thus to be selected out of three orders of the state, forming a triple hierarchy. 1. The citizens of each commune were to name one-tenth of their number, to be called the Communal Notables. From these were to be selected the magistrates of the Communes, and the justices of peace. 2. The Communal Notables were again to choose a tenth part of their number, who were called the Departmental Notables. The prefects, judges, and provincial administrators, were selected from this second body. 3. The Departmental Notables, in like manner, were to elect a tenth of their number, computed to amount to about six thousand persons; and from this highest class of citizens were to be filled the most dignified and important situations in the state,—the ministers and members of government, the legislature, the senate or grand jury, the principal judges, ambassadors, and the like. By this system it will be perceived, that instead of equality, three ranks of privileged citizens were to be established, from whose ranks alone certain offices could be filled. But this species of nobility, or, as it was called, Notability, was dependant not on birth, but on the choice of the people, from whom, though more or less directly, all officers without exception received their commissions. The elections were to take place every five years.

To represent the national dignity, power, and glory, there was to be an officer called the Grand Elector, who was to have guards, a revenue, and all the external appendages of royalty; all acts of government, laws, and judicial proceedings, were to run in his name. This species of *Roi faineant* was to possess no part of the royal authority, except the right of naming two Consuls, one for peace, and the other for war; and the farther right of selecting, from lists of candidates to be supplied by the three ranks of the hierarchy, the individuals who were to fill official situations as they should become vacant. But having exercised this privilege, the Grand Elector, or Proclaimer General, was *functus officio*, and had no active duties to perform, or power to exercise. The two Consuls, altogether uncontrolled by him or each other, were to act each in their own exclusive department of peace or war; and the other functionaries were alike independent of the Grand Proclaimer, or Elector, so soon as he had appointed them. He was to resemble no sovereign ever heard of but the Queen Bee, who has nothing to do but to repose in idleness and luxury, and give being to the active insects by whose industry the business of the hive is carried on.

The government being thus provided for, the Abbe Sieyes's system of legislature was something like that of France in the time of the Parliament. There was to be a Legislative Body of two hundred and fifty deputies; but they were to form rather a tribunal of judges, than a popular and deliberative assembly. Two other bodies, a Council of State on the part of the government, and a Tribune of one hundred deputies, on the part of the people, were to propose and discuss measures in presence of this Legislative Council, who then proceeded to adopt or reject them upon scrutiny and by vote, but without any oral delivery of opinions. The Tribune was invested with the right of guarding the freedom of the subject, and denouncing to the Convocative Senate such misconduct of office-bearers, or ill-chosen measures, or ill-advised laws, as should appear to them worthy of reprobation.

But, above all, Abbe Sieyes piqued himself upon the device of what he termed a Conservative Senate, which, possessing in itself no power of action or

legislation of any kind, was to have in charge the preservation of the constitution. To this senate was given the singular power, of calling in to become a member of their own body, and reducing of course to their own state of incapacity, any individual occupying another situation in the constitution, whose talents, ambition, or popularity, should render him a subject of jealousy. Even the Grand Elector himself was liable to this fate of *absorption*, as it was called, although he held his crown of Coccagn in the common case for life. Any exertion on his part of what might seem to the senate an act of arbitrary authority, entitled them to adopt him a member of their own body. He was thus removed from his palace, guards, and income, and made for ever incapable of any other office than that of a senator. This high point of policy was carrying the system of checks and balances as far as it could well go.

The first glance of this curious model must have convinced a practical politician that it was greatly too complicated and technical to be carried into effect. The utility of laws consists in their being of a character which compels the respect and obedience of those to whom they relate. The very delicacy of such an ingenious scheme rendered it incapable of obtaining general regard, since it was too refined to be understood save by profound philosophers. To the rest of the nation it must have been like a watch to a savage, who, being commanded to regulate his time by it, will probably prefer to make the machine correspond with his inclinations, by putting backward and forward the index at pleasure. A man of ordinary talent and honest disposition might have been disqualified for public life by this doctrine of absorption, just as a man ignorant of swimming would perish if flung into a lake. But a stout swimmer would easily gain the shore, and an individual like Buonaparte would set at defiance the new species of ostracism, and decline to be neutralized by the absorption of the senate. Above all, the plan of the Abbe destroyed the true principle of national representation, by introducing a metaphysical election of members of legislation, instead of one immediately derived from the direct vote of the people themselves. In the Abbe's alembic, the real and invaluable principle of popular representation was subtilized into smoke.

For these, or other reasons, the commissioners of the year Three did not approve of the plan proposed by Sieyes; and, equally dissatisfied with the constitution which they adopted, he withdrew himself from their deliberations, and accepted the situation of Ambassador to Prussia, where he discharged with great ability the task of a diplomatist.

In 1799, Sieyes returned from Berlin to Paris, full of hope to establish his own favourite model on the ruins of the Directorial Constitution, and, as a preliminary, obtained, as we have said, Reubel's seat in the Directory. Merlin and Lepaux, menaced with impeachments, were induced to send in their resignation. Treilhard had been previously displaced, on pretext of an informality in the choice. Instead of them were introduced into the Directory Roger Ducos, a Moderé, or rather a Royalist, with Gohier and Moulins, men of talents too ordinary to throw any opposition in the path of Sieyes. Barras, by his expenses and his luxurious mode of life, his connexion with stock-jobbers, and encouragement of speculation, was too much in danger of impeachment, to permit him to play a manly part. He truckled to circumstances, and allied himself with, or rather subjected himself to, Sieyes, who saw the time approaching when the constitution of the year Three must fall, and hoped to establish his own rejected model in its stead. But the revolution which he meditated could only be executed by force.

The change in the Directory had destroyed the government by bascule, or balance, and that intermediate and trimming influence being removed, the two parties of the Moderés and the Republicans stood full opposed to each other, and ready to try their strength in a severe struggle. Sieyes, though no Royalist, or at least certainly no adherent of the House of Bourbon, stood, never-

theless, at the head of the Moderés, and taxed his sagacity for means of ensuring their victory. The Moderés possessed a majority in the Council of the Ancients; but the Society of the Manege, Republicans if not Jacobins, had obtained, at the last election, a great superiority of numbers in the Council of Five Hundred. They were sure to be in decided opposition to any change of the constitution of the year Three; and such being the case, those who plotted the new revolution, could not attempt it without some external support. To call upon the people was no longer the order of the day. Indeed, it may be supposed that the ancient revolutionary columns would rather have risen against Sieyes, and in behalf of the Society of the Manege. The proposers of a new change had access, however, to the army, and to that they determined to appeal. The assistance of some military chief of the first reputation was necessary. Sieyes cast his eyes upon Joubert, an officer of high reputation, and one of the most distinguished amongst Buonaparte's generals. He was named by the Directors to the command of the Department of Paris, but shortly after was sent to Italy, with hopes that, acquiring a new fund of glory by checking the progress of Suwarrow, he might be yet more fitted to fill the public eye, and influence the general mind, in the crisis when Sieyes looked for his assistance. Joubert lost his life, however, at the great battle of Novi, fought betwixt him and Suwarrow; and so opportunely did his death make room for the pretensions of Buonaparte, that it has been rumoured, certainly without the least probability, that he did not fall by the fire of the Austrians, but by that of assassins hired by the family of Napoleon, to take out of the way a powerful competitor of their brother. This would have been a gratuitous crime, since they could neither reckon with certainty on the arrival of Buonaparte, nor upon his being adopted by Sieyes in place of Joubert.

Meanwhile, the family of Napoleon omitted no mode of keeping his merits in public remembrance. Reports from time to time appeared in the papers to this purpose, as when, to give him consequence doubtless, they pretended that the tower guns of London were fired, and public rejoicings made, upon a report that Napoleon had been assassinated. Madame Buonaparte, in the meanwhile, lived at great expense, and with much elegance, collecting around her whosoever was remarkable for talent and accomplishment, and many of the women of Paris who were best accustomed to the management of political intrigue. Lucien Buonaparte distinguished himself as an orator in the Council of Five Hundred, and although he had hitherto affected republican zeal, he now opposed, with much ability, the reviving influence of the democrats. Joseph Buonaparte, also, a man of talent, and of an excellent character, though much aspersed afterwards in consequence of the part in Spain assigned him by his brother, lived hospitably, saw much company, and maintained an ascendance in Parisian society. We cannot doubt that these near relatives of Buonaparte found means of communicating to him the state of affairs in Paris, and the opening which it afforded for the exercise of his distinguished talents.

The communication betwixt Toulon and Alexandria was, indeed, interrupted, but not altogether broken off, and we have no doubt that the struggle of parties in the interior, as well as the great disasters on the frontier, had their full influence in determining Buonaparte to his sudden return. Miot, though in no very positive strain, has named a Greek called Bambuki, as the bearer of a letter from Joseph to his brother, conveying this important intelligence. The private Memoirs of Fouché pretend that that minister purchased the secret of Napoleon's return being expected, from Josephine herself, for the sum of a thousand louis, and that the landing at Frejus was no surprise to him. Both these pieces of private history may be safely doubted; but it would be difficult to convince us that Buonaparte took the step of quitting Egypt on the vague intelligence afforded by the journals, and without confidential communication with his own family

To return to the state of the French government. The death of Joubert not only disconcerted the schemes of Sieyes, but exposed him and his party to retaliation. Bernadotte was minister of war, and he, with Jourdan and Augereau, were all warm in the cause of Republicanism. Any of these distinguished generals was capable of leading the military force to compel such an alteration in the constitution as might suit the purpose of their party, and thus reversing the project of Sieyes, who, without Joubert, was like the head without the arm that should execute. Already, Jourdan had made in the Council of Five Hundred a speech on the dangers of the country, which, in point of vehemence, might have been pronounced in the ancient hall of the Jacobins. He in plain terms threatened the Moderés with such a general insurrection as had taken place in the year 1792, and proposed to declare the country in danger. He was answered by Lucien Buonaparte, Chenier, and Boulay, who had great difficulty to parry the impetuosity with which the motion was urged forward. Though they succeeded in eluding the danger, it was still far from being over, and the democrats would probably have dared some desperate movement, if any additional reverse had been sustained on the frontier.

But as if the calamities of France, which of late had followed each other in quick succession, had attained their height of tide, the affairs of that country began all of a sudden to assume a more favourable aspect. The success of General Brune in Holland against the Anglo-Russian army, had obliged the invaders of Holland to retreat, and enter into a convention for evacuation of the country on which they had made their descent. A dispute, or misunderstanding, having occurred between the Emperors of Austria and Russia, the Archduke Charles, in order, it was alleged, to repel an incursion of the French into the countries on the Maine, withdrew a great part of his army from the line of the Limmat, which was taken up by the Russians under Korsakow. Massena took the advantage of this imprudent step, crossed the Limmat, surprised the Russians, and defeated Korsakow, whilst the formidable Suwarrow, who had already advanced to communicate with that general, found his right flank uncovered by his defeat, and had the greatest difficulty in executing a retrograde movement before General Lecourbe.

The news of these successes induced the Republicans to defer their attack upon the moderate party; and on so nice a point do the greatest events hang, that had a longer period intervened between these victories and the arrival of Buonaparte, it is most probable that he would have found the situation of military chief of the approaching revolution, which became vacant on the death of Joubert, filled up by some one of those generals, of whom success had extended the fame. But he landed at the happy crisis, when the presence of a chief of first-rate talents was indispensable, and when no favourite name had yet been found, to fill the public voice with half such loud acclaim as his own.

CHAPTER XXXII.

General rejoicing on the return of Buonaparte—He, meanwhile, secludes himself in Retirement and Literature.—Advances made to him on all sides.—Napoleon coalesces with the Abbe Sieyes.—Revolution of the 18th Brumaire—Particulars of that Event.—Clashing Views of the Councils of Ancients, and the Five Hundred.—Barras and his Colleagues resign, leaving the whole Power in the hands of Napoleon.—Proceedings of the Councils on the 18th—and 19th.—Sittings removed from Paris to St Cloud—Buonaparte visits both on the latter Day.—Violent Commotion in the Council of Five Hundred—Napoleon received with great hostility, menaced and assaulted, and finally extricated by his Grenadiers, breathless and exhausted.—Lucien Buonaparte, the President, retires from the Hall with a similar Escort—Declares the Council of Five Hundred dissolved—They are then dispersed by Military Force.—Various Rumours stated and discussed.—Both Councils adjourn to the 19th February 1800, after appointing a Provisional Consular Government, of Buonaparte, Sieyes, and Ducos.

BUONAPARTE had caused himself to be preceded by an account of his campaigns in Africa and Asia, in which the splendid victory over the Turks at Aboukir enabled him to gloss over his bad success in Syria, the total loss of his fleet, and the danger of Malta, which was closely besieged by the English. Still, however, these despatches could never have led any one to expect the sudden return of a general engaged on a foreign service of the utmost importance, who, without having a better reason to allege, than his own opinion that his talents were more essential to his country in France than in Egypt, left his army to its fate, and came, without either order or permission from his government, to volunteer his services where they were not expected, or perhaps wished for. Another in the same circumstances, or perhaps the same general at another period of the Revolution, would have been received by the public with alienated favour, and by the government with severe inquiry, if not with denunciation.

On the contrary, such was the general reliance on the talents of Buonaparte, that, delighted to see him arrive, no one thought of asking wherefore, or by whose authority he had returned. He was received like a victorious monarch re-entering his dominions at his own time and pleasure. Bells were everywhere rung, illuminations made, a delirium of joy agitated the public mind, and the messenger who carried the news of his disembarkation to Paris, was received as if he had brought news of a battle gained.

The hall of the Council of Five Hundred re-echoed with cries of victory, while the orator, announcing the victories of Brune over the English, and Massena over the Russians, dwelt upon the simple fact of Buonaparte's return, as of interest equal to all these successes. He was heard with shouts of "Long live the Republic!" which, as the event proved, was an exclamation but very indifferently adapted to the occasion.

Josephine, and Joseph Buonaparte, apprised by the government of the arrival of Napoleon, hastened to meet him on the road; and his progress towards Paris was everywhere attended by the same general acclamations which had received him at landing.

The members of government, it must be supposed, felt alarm and anxiety, which they endeavoured to conceal, under the appearance of sharing in the general joy. The arrival of a person so influential by his fame, so decided in his character, engaged with no faction, and pledged to no political system, was likely to give victory to one or the other party who were contending for superiority, as he should himself determine. The eyes of all men were upon Na-

napoleon, while his reserved and retired mode of life prevented any accurate anticipation being formed of the part which he was likely to take in the approaching convulsions of the state. While both parties might hope for his participation and succour, neither ventured to call into question his purpose, or the authority by which he had left his army in Egypt, and appeared thus unexpectedly in the capital. On the contrary, they courted him on either hand as the arbiter, whose decision was likely to have most influence on the state of the nation.

Napoleon, meanwhile, seemed to give his exclusive attention to literature, and, having exchanged the usual visits of form with the ministers of the Republic, he was more frequently to be found at the Institute, or discussing with the traveller Volney, and other men of letters, the information which he had acquired in Egypt on science and antiquities, than in the haunts of politicians, or the society of the leaders of either party in the state. Neither was he to be seen at the places of popular resort—he went into no general company, seldom attended the theatres, and, when he did, took his seat in a private box.

A public entertainment was given in honour of the General in the church of St Sulpice, which was attended by both the Legislative Bodies. Moreau shared the same honour, perhaps on that account not the more agreeable to Buonaparte. Jourdan and Augereau did not appear—a cloud seemed to hang over the festival—Napoleon only presented himself for a very short time, and the whole was over in the course of an hour.

To the military, his conduct seemed equally reserved—he held no levees, and attended no reviews. While all ranks contended in offering their tributes of applause, he turned in silence from receiving them.

In all this there was deep policy. No one knew better how much popular applause depends on the gloss of novelty, and how great is the difference in public estimation, betwixt him who appears to hunt and court acclamations, and the wiser and more dignified favourite of the multitude, whose popularity follows after him and seeks him out, instead of being the object of his pursuit and ambition. Yet under this still and apparently indifferent demeanour, Napoleon was in secret employed in collecting all the information necessary concerning the purposes and the powers of the various parties in the state; and as each was eager to obtain his countenance, he had no difficulty in obtaining full explanations on these points.

The violent Republicans, who possessed the majority in the Council of Five Hundred, made advances to him; and the Generals Jourdan, Augereau, and Bernadotte, offered to place him at the head of that party, provided he would maintain the democratical constitution of the year Three. In uniting with this active and violent party, Buonaparte saw every chance of instant and immediate success; but, by succeeding in the outset, he would probably have marred the farther projects of ambition which he already nourished. Military leaders, such as Jourdan and Bernadotte, at the head of a party so furious as the Republicans, could not have been thrown aside without both danger and difficulty; and it being unquestionably the ultimate intention of Buonaparte to usurp the supreme power, it was most natural for him to seek adherents among those, who, though differing concerning the kind of government which should be finally established, concurred in desiring a change from the republican model.

Barras, too, endeavoured to sound the purposes of the General of the Army of Egypt. He hinted to him a plan of placing at the head of the Directory Hedouville, a man of ordinary talent, then general of what was still termed the Army of England, of retiring himself from power, and of conferring on Napoleon the general command of the Republican forces on the frontiers, which he vainly supposed preferment sufficient to gratify his ambition. Buonaparte would not listen to a hint which went to remove him from the capital, and the supreme administration of affairs—he knew also that Barras's character was contemptible, and his resources diminished—that his subsequent conduct had cancelled

the merit which he had acquired by the overthrow of Robespierre, and that to unite with him in any degree would be to adopt, in the public opinion, the very worst and most unpopular portion of the Directorial Government. He rejected the alliance of Barras, therefore, even when, abandoning his own plan, the Director offered to concur in any which Napoleon might dictate.

A union with Sieyes, and the party whom he influenced, promised greater advantages. Under this speculative politician were united for the time all who, though differing in other points, joined in desiring a final change from a revolutionary to a moderate and efficient government, bearing something of a monarchical character. Their number rendered this party powerful.* In the Directory it was espoused by Sieyes and Ducos; it possessed a large majority in the Council of Ancients, and a respectable minority in that of the Five Hundred. The greater part of the middling classes throughout France, embraced with more or less zeal the principles of moderation; and agreed, that an executive government of some strength, was necessary to save them from the evils of combined revolutionary movements. Though the power of the Moderates was great, yet their subsequent objects, in case of success, were various. Thus Buonaparte saw himself encouraged to hope for victory over the existing government and the Republicans, by the united strength of the Moderates of every class, whilst their difference in opinion concerning the ultimate measures to be adopted, afforded him the best opportunity of advancing, during the competition, his own pretensions to the larger share of the spoil.

Napoleon communicated accordingly with Sieyes, upon the understanding that he was to be raised to the principal administration of affairs; that the constitution of the year Three, which he himself had once pronounced "the masterpiece of legislation, which had abolished the errors of eighteen centuries," was entirely to be done away; and that a constitution was to be adopted in its stead, of which he knew nothing more, than that it was ready drawn up, and lay in the portfolio of Sieyes. No doubt, the General mentally reserved the right of altering and adjusting it as should best suit his own views,—a right which he failed not to exercise to a serious extent. When these great preliminaries had been adjusted, it was agreed that it should be executed between the 15th and 20th Brumaire.

In the interim, several men of influence of both councils were admitted into the secret. Talleyrand, who had been deprived of office by the influence of the Republicans, brought his talents to the aid of Buonaparte. Fouché, according to Napoleon, was not consulted—the Memoirs which bear his name aver the contrary—it is certain, that in his important capacity of minister of police, he acted in Buonaparte's favour during the Revolution. Some leading members of both legislative bodies were cautiously intrusted with what was going forward, and others were generally advised to hold themselves in readiness for a great movement.

A sufficient military force was next to be provided; and this was not difficult, for the reputation of Buonaparte ensured the conspirators unlimited influence among the soldiery. Three regiments of dragoons were enthusiastically petitioning the honour of being reviewed by Napoleon. The adherence of these troops might be counted upon. The officers of the garrison of Paris were desirous to pay their respects to him; so were the forty adjutants of the National Guard, whom he himself had appointed when general of the troops in the interior. Many other officers, as well reduced as holding commissions, desired to see the celebrated General, that they might express their devotion to his person, and adherence to his fortunes. All these introductions had been artfully postponed.

Two men of more renowned name, Moreau and Macdonald, had made tenders of service to Buonaparte. These both favoured the moderate party, and

had no suspicion of the ultimate design of Napoleon, or the final result of his undertaking.

A final resolution on 15th Brumaire determined the 18th (8th November) for the great attempt—an interval was necessary, but the risk of discovery and anticipation made it desirable that it should be as short as possible. The secret was well kept; yet being unavoidably intrusted to many persons, some floating and vague rumours did get abroad, and gave an alarm to the parties concerned.

Meanwhile, all the generals and officers whom we have named, were invited to repair to Napoleon's house at six o'clock on the morning of the 18th Brumaire, and the three regiments of cavalry already mentioned were appointed to be ready and mounted in the Champs Elysees, to receive the honour of being reviewed by Buonaparte, according to their petition. As an excuse for assigning so unusual an hour of rendezvous, it was said that the General was obliged to set out upon a journey. Many officers, however, understood or guessed what was to be done, and came armed with pistols as well as with swords. Some were without such information or presentiment. Le Febvre, the commandant of the guard of the Representative Bodies, supposed to be devoted to the Directory, had only received an invitation to attend this military assembly on the preceding midnight. Bernadotte, unacquainted with the project, and attached to the Republican faction, was, however, brought to Buonaparte's house by his brother Joseph.

The surprise of some, and the anxious curiosity of all, may be supposed, when they found a military levee so numerous and so brilliant assembled at a house incapable of containing half of them. Buonaparte was obliged to receive them in the open air. Leaving them thus assembled, and waiting their cue to enter on the stage, let us trace the political manœuvres from which the military were to take the signal for action.

Early as Buonaparte's levee had taken place, the Council of Ancients, secretly and hastily assembled, had met still earlier. The ears of all were filled by a report, generally circulated, that the Republican party had formed a daring plan for giving a new popular impulse to the government. It was said, that the resolution was taken at the Hotel de Salm, amongst the party who still adopted the principles of the old Jacobins, to connect the two Representative Bodies into one National Assembly, and invest the powers of government in a Committee of Public Safety, after the model of what was called the Reign of Terror. Circulated hastily, and with such addition to the tale as rumours speedily acquire, the mind of the Council of Ancients was agitated with much fear and anxiety. Cornudet, Lebrun, and Fargues, made glowing speeches to the Assembly, in which the terror that their language inspired was rendered greater by the mysterious and indefinite manner in which they expressed themselves. They spoke of personal danger—of being overawed in their deliberations—of the fall of liberty, and of the approaching destruction of the Republic. "You have but an instant to save France," said Cornudet; "permit it to pass away, and the country will be a mere carcase, disputed by the vultures, whose prey it must become." Though the charge of conspiracy was not distinctly defined, the measures recommended to defeat it were sufficiently decisive.

By the 102d, 103d, and 104th articles of the Constitution, it was provided that the Council of Ancients might, if they saw it expedient, alter the place where the Legislative Bodies met, and convoke them elsewhere; a provision designed doubtless to prevent the exercise of that compulsion, which the Parisians had at one time assumed over the National Assembly and Convention. This power the Council of Ancients now exercised. By one edict the sittings of the two councils were removed to St Cloud; by another, the Council delegated to General Buonaparte full power to see this measure carried into effect, and vested him for that purpose with the military command of the department. A state messenger was sent to communicate to the General these important mea-

suren, and require his presence in the Council of Ancients; and this was the crisis which he had so anxiously expected.

A few words determined the numerous body of officers, by whom the messenger found him surrounded, to concur with him without scruple. Even General Le Febvre, who commanded the guard of the Legislative Bodies, declared his adhesion to Buonaparte.

The Directory had not even yet taken the alarm. Two of them, indeed, Sieyes and Ducos, being in the secret of the conspiracy, were already at the Tuilleries, to second the movement which was preparing. It is said that Barras had seen them pass in the morning, and as they were both mounted, had been much amused with the awkward horsemanship of Sieyes. He little guessed on what expedition he was bound.

When Buonaparte sallied forth on horseback, and at the head of such a gallant cavalcade of officers, his first movement was to assume the command of the three regiments of cavalry, already drawn up in the Champs Elysees, and to lead them to the Tuilleries, where the Council of Ancients expected him. He entered their Hall, surrounded by his military staff, and by those other generals, whose name carried the memory of so many victories. "You are the wisdom of the nation," he said to the Council. "I come, surrounded by the generals of the Republic, to promise you their support. I name Le Febvre my lieutenant. Let us not lose time looking for precedents. Nothing in history ever resembled the end of the eighteenth century—nothing in the eighteenth century resembled this moment. Your wisdom has devised the necessary measure, our arms shall put it into execution." He announced to the military the will of the Council, and the command with which they had intrusted him; and it was received with loud shouts.

In the meanwhile the three Directors, Barras, Gohier, and Moulins, who were not in the secret of the morning, began too late to take the alarm. Moulins proposed to send a battalion to surround the house of Buonaparte, and make prisoner the General, and whomsoever else they found there. But they had no longer the least influence over the soldiery, and had the mortification to see their own personal guard, when summoned by an aid-de-camp of Buonaparte, march away to join the forces which he commanded, and leave them defenceless.

Barras sent his secretary, Bottot, to expostulate with Buonaparte. The General received him with great haughtiness, and publicly, before a large group of officers and soldiers, upbraided him with the reverses of the country; not in the tone of an ordinary citizen, possessing but his own individual interest in the fate of a great nation, but like a prince, who, returning from a distant expedition, finds that in his absence his deputies have abused their trust, and misruled his dominions. "What have you done," he said, "for that fine France, which I left you in such a brilliant condition? I left you peace, I have found war—I left you the wealth of Italy, I have found taxation and misery. Where are the hundred thousand Frenchmen whom I have known?—all of them my companions in glory?—They are dead." It was plain, that even now, when his enterprise was but commenced, Buonaparte had already assumed that tone, which seemed to account every one answerable to him for deficiencies in the public service, and he himself responsible to no one.

Barras, overwhelmed and stunned, and afraid, perhaps, of impeachment for his alleged peculations, belied the courage which he was once supposed to possess, and submitted, in the most abject terms, to the will of the victor. He sent in his resignation, in which he states, "that the weal of the Republic, and his zeal for liberty alone, could have ever induced him to undertake the burden of a public office; and that, seeing the destinies of the Republic were now in the custody of her youthful and invincible General, he gladly resigned his authority." He left Paris for his country seat, accompanied by a guard of cavalry, which

Buonaparte ordered to attend him, as much perhaps to watch his motions as to do him honour, though the last was the ostensible reason. His colleagues, Gohier and Moulins, also resigned their office; Sieyes and Ducos had already set the example; and thus, the whole Constitutional Executive Council was dissolved, while the real power was vested in Buonaparte's single person. Cambaceres, minister of justice, Fouché, minister of police, with all the rest of the administration, acknowledged his authority accordingly; and he was thus placed in full possession as well of the civil as of the military power.

The Council of Five Hundred, or rather the republican majority of that body, showed a more stubborn temper; and if, instead of resigning, Barras, Gohier, and Moulins, had united themselves to its leaders, they might perhaps have given trouble to Buonaparte, successful as he had hitherto been.

This hostile Council only met at ten o'clock on that memorable day, when they received, to their surprise, the message, intimating that the Council of Ancients had changed the place of meeting from Paris to St Cloud; and thus removed their debates from the neighbourhood of the populace, over whom the old Jacobinical principles might have retained influence. The laws as they stood afforded the young Council no means of evading compliance, and they accordingly adjourned to meet the next day at St Cloud, with unabated resolution to maintain the democratical part of the constitution. They separated amid shouts of "Long live the Republic and the Constitution!" which were echoed by the galleries. The *tricoteuses*,* and other more zealous attendants on their debates, resolved to transfer themselves to St Cloud also, and appeared there in considerable numbers on the ensuing day, when it was evident the enterprise of Sieyes and of Buonaparte must be either perfected or abandoned.

The contending parties held counsel all the evening, and deep into the night, to prepare for the final contest on the morrow. Sieyes advised that forty leaders of the opposition should be arrested; but Buonaparte esteemed himself strong enough to obtain a decisive victory, without resorting to any such obnoxious violence. They adjusted their plan of operations in both Councils, and agreed that the government to be established should be provisionally intrusted to three Consuls, Buonaparte, Sieyes, and Ducos. Proper arrangements were made of the armed force at St Cloud; and the command was confided to the zeal and fidelity of Murat. Buonaparte used some interest to prevent Bernadotte, Jourdan, and Augereau, from attending at St Cloud the next day, as he did not expect them to take his part in the approaching crisis. The last of these seemed rather hurt at the want of confidence which this caution implied, and said, "What, general! dare you not trust your own little Augereau?" He went to St Cloud accordingly.

Some preparations were necessary to put the palace of St Cloud in order, to receive the two Councils; the Orangerie being assigned to the Council of Five Hundred; the Gallery of Mars to that of the Ancients.

In the Council of Ancients, the Moderés, having the majority, were prepared to carry forward and complete their measures for a change of government and constitution. But the minority, having rallied after the surprise of the preceding day, were neither silent nor passive. The Commission of Inspectors, whose duty it was to convene the Council, were inculpated severely for having omitted to give information to several leading members of the minority, of the extraordinary convocation which took place at such an unwonted hour on the morning preceding. The propriety, nay the legality, of the transference of the Legislative Bodies to St Cloud, was also challenged. A sharp debate took place, which was terminated by the appearance of Napoleon, who entered the hall, and

* The women of lower rank who attended the debates of the Council, plying the task of knitting while they listened to politics, were so denominated. They were always zealous democrats, and might claim in one sense Shakspeare's description of

"The free maids, who weave their thread with bones."

harangued the members by permission of the president. "Citizens," said he, "you are placed upon a volcano. Let me tell you the truth with the frankness of a soldier. Citizens, I was remaining tranquil with my family, when the commands of the Council of Ancients called me to arms. I collected my brave military companions, and brought forward the arms of the country in obedience to you who are the head. We are rewarded with calumny—they compare me to Cromwell—to Cæsar. Had I desired to usurp the supreme authority, I have had opportunities to do so before now. But I swear to you the country has not a more disinterested patriot. We are surrounded by dangers and by civil war. Let us not hazard the loss of those advantages for which we have made such sacrifices—Liberty and Equality."

"And the Constitution!" exclaimed Linglet, a democratic member, interrupting a speech which seemed to be designedly vague and inexplicit.

"The Constitution!" answered Buonaparte, giving way to a more natural expression of his feelings, and avowing his object more clearly than he had yet dared to do—"It was violated on the 18th Fructidor—violated on the 22d Floreal—violated on the 30th Prairial. All parties have invoked it—all have disregarded it in turn. It can be no longer a means of safety to any one, since it obtains the respect of no one. Since we cannot preserve the Constitution, let us at least save Liberty and Equality, the foundations on which it is erected." He went on in the same strain to assure them, that for the safety of the Republic he relied only on the wisdom and power of the Council of Ancients, since in the Council of Five Hundred were found those men who desired to bring back the Convention, with its revolutionary committees, its scaffolds, its popular insurrections. "But I," he said, "will save you from such horrors—I and my brave comrades at arms, whose swords and caps I see at the door of the hall; and if any hired orator shall talk of outlawry, I will appeal to the valour of my comrades, with whom I have fought and conquered for liberty."

The Assembly invited the General to detail the particulars of the conspiracy to which he had alluded, but he confined himself to a reference to the testimony of Sieyes and Ducos; and again reiterating that the Constitution could not save the country, and inviting the Council of Ancients to adopt some course which might enable them to do so, he left them, amid cries of "Vive Buonaparte!" loudly echoed by the military in the court-yard, to try the effect of his eloquence on the more unmanageable Council of Five Hundred.

The deputies of the younger Council having found the place designed for their meeting filled with workmen, were for some time in a situation which seemed to resemble the predicament of the National Assembly at Versailles, when they took refuge in a tennis-court. The recollection was of such a nature as inflamed and animated their resolution, and they entered the Orangerie, when at length admitted, in no good humour with the Council of Ancients, or with Buonaparte. Proposals of accommodation had been circulated among them ineffectually. They would have admitted Buonaparte into the Directory, but refused to consent to any radical change in the constitution of the year Three.

The debate of the day, remarkable as the last in which the Republican party enjoyed the full freedom of speech in France, was opened on 19th Brumaire, at two o'clock, Lucien Buonaparte being president. Gaudin, a member of the moderate party, began by moving, that a committee of seven members should be formed, to report upon the state of the Republic; and that measures should be taken for opening a correspondence with the Council of Ancients. He was interrupted by exclamations and clamour on the part of the majority.

"The Constitution! The Constitution or Death!" was echoed and re-echoed on every side. "Bayonets frighten us not," said Delbrel; "we are freemen."

"Down with the Dictatorship—no Dictators!" cried other members.

Lucien in vain endeavoured to restore order. Gaudin was dragged from the tribune; the voice of other Moderates was overpowered by clamour—never

had the party of democracy shown itself fiercer or more tenacious than when about to receive the death-blow.

"Let us swear to preserve the Constitution of the year Three!" exclaimed Delbrel; and the applause which followed the proposition was so general, that it silenced all resistance. Even the members of the moderate party—nay, even Lucien Buonaparte himself—were compelled to take the oath of fidelity to the Constitution, which he and they were leagued to destroy.

"The oath you have just taken," said Bigonnet, "will occupy a place in the annals of history, beside the celebrated vow taken in the tennis-court. The one was the foundation of liberty, the other shall consolidate the structure." In the midst of this fermentation, the letter containing the resignation of Barras was read; and received with marks of contempt, as the act of a soldier deserting his post in the time of danger. The moderate party seemed silenced, overpowered, and on the point of coalescing with the great majority of the Council, when the clash of arms was heard at the entrance of the apartment. All eyes were turned to that quarter. Bayonets, drawn sabres, the plumed hats of general officers and aids-de-camp, and the caps of grenadiers, were visible without, while Napoleon entered the Orangerie, attended by four grenadiers belonging to the constitutional guard of the Councils. The soldiers remained at the bottom of the hall, while he advanced, with a measured step and uncovered, about one-third up the room.

He was received with loud murmurs. "What! drawn weapons, armed men, soldiers in the sanctuary of the laws!" exclaimed the members, whose courage seemed to rise against the display of force with which they were menaced. All the deputies arose, some rushed on Buonaparte, and seized him by the collar; others called out—"Outlawry—outlawry—let him be proclaimed a traitor!" It is said that Arena, a native of Corsica like himself, aimed a dagger at his breast, which was only averted by the interposition of one of the grenadiers. The fact seems extremely doubtful, though it is certain that Buonaparte was seized by two or three members, while others exclaimed, "Was it for this you gained so many victories?" and loaded him with reproaches. At this crisis a party of grenadiers rushed into the hall with drawn swords, and extricating Buonaparte from the deputies, bore him off in their arms breathless with the scuffle.

It was probably at this crisis that Augereau's faith in his ancient general's fortune began to totter, and his revolutionary principles to gain an ascendance over his military devotion. "A fine situation you have brought yourself into," he said to Buonaparte, who answered sternly, "Augereau, things were worse at Arcola—Take my advice—remain quiet, in a short time all this will change." Augereau, whose active assistance and co-operation might have been at this critical period of the greatest consequence to the Council, took the hint, and continued passive.* Jourdan and Bernadotte, who were ready to act on the popular side, had the soldiers shown the least hesitation in yielding obedience to Buonaparte, perceived no opening of which to avail themselves.

The Council remained in the highest state of commotion, the general voice accusing Buonaparte of having usurped the supreme authority, calling for a sentence of outlawry, or demanding that he should be brought to the bar.

* The *Moniteur* is anxious to exculpate Augereau from having taken any part in favour of the routed party on the 19th Brumaire. That officer, it says, did not join in the general oath of fidelity to the Constitution of the year Three. The same official paper adds, that on the evening of the 19th, being invited by some of the leading persons of the democratic faction, to take the military command of their partisans, he had asked them by way of reply, "Whether they supposed he would tarnish the reputation he had acquired in the army, by taking command of wretches like them?" Augereau, it may be remembered, was the general who was sent by Buonaparte to Paris to act as military chief on the part of the Directory, in the revolution of the 18th Fructidor, in which the soldiery had willingly followed him. Buonaparte was probably well pleased to keep a man of his military reputation and resolved character out of the combat if possible.

"Can you ask me to put the outlawry of my own brother to the vote?" said Lucien. But this appeal to his personal situation and feelings made no impression upon the Assembly, who continued clamorously to demand the question. At length Lucien flung on the desk his hat, scarf, and other parts of his official dress. "Let me be rather heard," he said, "as the advocate of him whom you falsely and rashly accuse." But his request only added to the tumult. At this moment a small body of grenadiers, sent by Napoleon to his brother's assistance, marched into the hall.

They were at first received with applause; for the Council, accustomed to see the triumph of democratical opinions among the military, did not doubt that they were deserting their general to range themselves on the side of the deputies. Their appearance was but momentary—they instantly left the hall, carrying Lucien in the centre of the detachment.

Matters were now come to extremity on either side. The Council, thrown into the greatest disorder by these repeated military incursions, remained in violent agitation, furious against Buonaparte, but without the calmness necessary to adopt decisive measures.

Meantime the sight of Napoleon, almost breathless, and bearing marks of personal violence, excited to the highest the indignation of the military. In broken words he told them, that when he wished to show them the road to lead the country to victory and fame, "they had answered him with daggers."

Cries of resentment arose from the soldiery, augmented when the party sent to extricate the President brought him to the ranks as to a sanctuary. Lucien, who seconded his brother admirably, or rather who led the way in this perilous adventure, mounted on horseback instantly, and called out, in a voice naturally deep and sonorous, "General, and you, soldiers! The President of the Council of Five Hundred proclaims to you, that factious men, with drawn daggers, have interrupted the deliberations of the Assembly—He authorizes you to employ force against these disturbers—The Assembly of Five Hundred is dissolved!"

Murat, deputed by Buonaparte to execute the commands of Lucien, entered the Orangerie with drums beating, at the head of a detachment with fixed bayonets. He summoned the deputies to disperse on their peril, while an officer of the constitutional guard called out, he could be no longer answerable for their safety. Cries of fear became now mingled with vociferations of rage, execrations of abhorrence, and shouts of *Vive la Republique*. An officer then mounted the President's seat, and summoned the representatives to retire. "The General," said he, "has given orders."

Some of the deputies and spectators began now to leave the hall; the greater part continued firm, and sustained the shouts by which they reprobated this military intrusion. The drums at length struck up, and drowned further remonstrance.

"Forward, grenadiers," said the officer who commanded the party. They levelled their muskets, and advanced as if to the charge. The deputies seem hitherto to have retained a lingering hope that their persons would be regarded as inviolable. They now fled on all sides, most of them jumping from the windows of the Orangerie, and leaving behind them their official caps, scarfs, and gowns. In a very few minutes the apartments were entirely clear; and thus, furnishing, at its conclusion, a striking parallel to the scene which ended the Long Parliament of Charles the First's time, terminated the last democratical assembly of France.

Buonaparte affirms, that one of the general officers in his suite offered to take the command of fifty men, and place them in ambush to fire on the deputies in their flight, which he wisely declined as a useless and gratuitous cruelty.

The result of these violent and extraordinary measures was intimated to the Council of Ancients; the immediate cause of the expulsion of the Five Hundred being referred to the alleged violence on the person of Buonaparte, which

was said by one member to have been committed by Arena, while another exaggerated the charge, by asserting that it was offered in consequence of Buonaparte's having made disclosure of some mal-practices of the Corsican deputy while in Italy. The *Moniteur* soon after improved this story of Arena and his single poniard, into a party consisting of Arena, Marquezzi, and other deputies, armed with pistols and daggers. At other times, Buonaparte was said to have been wounded, which certainly was not the case. The effect of the example of Brutus upon a republican, and an Italian to boot, might render the conduct ascribed to Arena credible enough; but the existence of a party armed with pocket-pistols and daggers, for the purpose of opposing regular troops, is too ridiculous to be believed. Arena published a denial of the attempt; and among the numbers who witnessed the scene no proof was ever appealed to, save the real evidence of a dagger found on the floor, and the torn sleeve of a grenadier's coat, circumstances which might be accounted for many ways. But having served at the time as a popular apology for the strong measures which had been adopted, the rumour was not allowed to fall asleep. Thomé, the grenadier, was declared to have merited well of his country by the Legislative Body, entertained at dinner by the General, and rewarded with a salute and a valuable jewel by Josephine. Other reports were put in circulation concerning the violent purposes of the Jacobins. It was said the ancient revolutionist, Santerre, was setting a popular movement on foot, in the Fauxbourg Saint Antoine, and that Buonaparte, through the Ex-Director Moulins, had cautioned him against proceeding in his purpose, declaring, that if he did, he would have him shot by martial law.

But the truth is, that although there can be no doubt that the popular party entertained a full purpose of revolutionizing the government anew, and restoring its republican character, yet they were anticipated and surprised by the movement of the 18th and 19th Brumaire, which could not, therefore, in strict language, be justified as a defensive measure. Its excuse must rest on the proposition which seems undoubted, that affairs were come to such extremity that a contest was unavoidable, and that therefore it was necessary for the moderate party to take the advantage of the first blow, though they exposed themselves in doing so to the reproach of being called the aggressors in the contest.

The Council of Ancients had expressed some alarm and anxiety about the employment of military force against the other branch of the constitutional representation. But Lucien Buonaparte, having succeeded in rallying around him about a hundred of the Council of the Juniors, assumed the character and office of that Legislative Body, now effectually purged of all the dissidents, and, as President of the Five Hundred, gave to the Council of Ancients such an explanation, as they, nothing loath to be convinced, admitted to be satisfactory. Both Councils then adjourned till the 19th February 1800, after each had devolved their powers upon a committee of twenty-five persons, who were instructed to prepare a civil code against the meeting of the Legislative Bodies. A provisional consular government was appointed, consisting of Buonaparte, Sieyès, and Roger Ducos.

The victory, therefore, of the 18th and 19th Brumaire, was, by dint of sword and bayonet, completely secured. It remained for the conquerors to consider the uses which were to be made of it.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Effects of the Victory of the 18th and 19th Brumaire.—Clemency of the New Consulate.—Beneficial change in the Finances.—Law of Hostages repealed.—Religious liberty allowed.—Improvements in the War Department.—Submission of the Chouans, and Pacification of La Vendée.—Ascendency of Napoleon in the Consulate.—Disappointment of the Abbe Sieyes.—Committee formed to consider Sieyes' Plan of a Constitution—Adopted in part—but rejected in essentials. A new one adopted, monarchical in every thing but form.—Sieyes retires from public life on a pension.—General view of the new Consular form of Government.—Despotic Power of the First Consul.—Reflections on Buonaparte's Conduct upon this occasion.

THE victory obtained over the Directory and the democrats, upon the 18th and 19th Brumaire, was generally acceptable to the French nation. The feverish desire of liberty, which had been the characteristic of all descriptions of persons in the year 1792, was quenched by the blood shed during the Reign of Terror; and even just and liberal ideas of freedom had so far fallen into disrepute, from their resemblance to those which had been used as a pretext for the disgusting cruelties perpetrated at that terrible period, that they excited from association a kind of loathing as well as dread. The great mass of the nation sought no longer guarantees for metaphysical rights, but, broken down by suffering, desired repose, and were willing to submit to any government which promised to secure to them the ordinary benefits of civilization.

Buonaparte and Sieyes,—for, though only during a brief space, they may still be regarded as joint authorities,—were enabled to profit by this general acquiescence, in many important particulars. It put it in their power to dispense with the necessity of pursuing and crushing their scattered adversaries; and the French saw a revolution effected in their system, and that by military force, in which not a drop of blood was spilt. Yet, as had been the termination of most recent revolutions, lists of proscription were prepared; and without previous trial or legal sentence, fifty-nine of those who had chiefly opposed the new Consulate on the 18th and 19th Brumaire were condemned to deportation by the sole fiat of the Consuls. Sieyes is said to have suggested this unjust and arbitrary measure, which, bearing a colour of revenge and persecution, was highly unpopular. It was not carried into execution. Exceptions were at first made in favour of such of the condemned persons as showed themselves disposed to be tractable; and at length the sentence was altogether dispensed with, and the more obnoxious partisans of democracy were only placed under the superintendence of the police. This conduct showed at once conscious strength, and a spirit of clemency, than which no attributes can contribute more to the popularity of a new government; since the spirit of the opposition, deprived of hope of success, and yet not urged on by despair of personal safety, gradually becomes disposed to sink into acquiescence. The democrats, or, as they were now termed, the anarchists, became intimidated, or cooled in their zeal; and only a few of the more enthusiastic continued yet to avow those principles, to breathe the least doubt of which had been, within but a few months, a crime worthy of death.

Other and most important decrees were adopted by the Consuls, tending to lighten the burdens which their predecessors had imposed on the nation, and which had rendered their government so unpopular. Two of the most oppressive measures of the Directors were repealed without delay.

The first referred to the finances, which were found in a state of ruinous exhaustion, and were only maintained by a system of compulsory and progressive loans, according to rates of assessment on the property of the citizens. The

new minister of finance, Gaudin, would not even go to bed, or sleep a single night, until he had produced a substitute for this ruinous resource, for which he levied an additional rise of twenty-five per cent on all contributions, direct and indirect, which produced a large sum. He carried order and regularity into all the departments of finance, improved the collection and income of the funds of the Republic, and inspired so much confidence by the moderation and success of his measures, that credit began to revive, and several loans were attained on easy terms.

The repeal of the law of hostages was a measure equally popular. This cruel and unreasonable enactment, which rendered the aged and weak, unprotected females, and helpless children of emigrants, or armed royalists, responsible for the actions of their relatives, was immediately mitigated. Couriers were despatched to open the prisons; and this act of justice and humanity was hailed as a pledge of returning moderation and liberality.

Important measures were also taken for tranquillizing the religious discord by which the country had been so long agitated. Buonaparte, who had lately professed himself more than half persuaded of the truth of Mahommed's mission, became now—such was the decree of Providence—the means of restoring to France the free exercise of the Christian faith. The mummary of Reveilliere Lepaux's heathenism was by general consent abandoned. The churches were restored to public worship; pensions were allowed to such religious persons as took an oath of fidelity to the government; and more than twenty thousand clergymen, with whom the prisons had been filled, in consequence of intolerant laws, were set at liberty upon taking the same vow. Public and domestic rites of worship in every form were tolerated and protected; and the law of the decades, or Theophilanthropic festivals, was abolished. Even the earthly relics of Pope Pius VI., who had died at Valence, and in exile, were not neglected, but received, singular to relate, the rites of sepulture with the solemnity due to his high office, by command of Buonaparte, who had first shaken the Papal authority; and in doing so, as he boasted in his Egyptian proclamations, had destroyed the emblem of Christian worship.

The part taken by Cambaceres, the Minister of Justice, in the revolution of Brumaire, had been agreeable to Buonaparte; and his moderation now aided him in the lenient measures which he had determined to adopt. He was a good lawyer, and a man of sense and information, and under his administration means were taken to relax the oppressive severity of the laws against the emigrants. Nine of them, noblemen of the most ancient families in France, had been thrown on the coast near Calais by shipwreck, and the Directors had meditated bringing to trial those whom the winds and waves had spared, as falling under the class of emigrants returned to France without permission, against whom the laws denounced the penalty of death. Buonaparte more liberally considered their being found within the prohibited territory, as an act, not of volition, but of inevitable necessity, and they were dismissed accordingly.

From the same spirit of politic clemency, La Fayette, Latour Maubourg, and others, who, although revolutionists, had been expelled from France for not carrying their principles of freedom sufficiently high and far, were permitted to return to their native country.

It may be easily believed that the military department of the state underwent a complete reform under the authority of Buonaparte. Dubois de Crancé, the Minister at War under the Directors, was replaced by Berthier; and Napoleon gives a strange picture of the incapacity of the former functionary. He declares he could not furnish a single report of the state of the army—that he had obtained no regular returns of the effective strength of the different regiments—that many corps had been formed in the departments, whose very existence was unknown to the minister at war; and finally, that when pressed for reports of the pay, of the victualling, and of the clothing of the troops, he had

replied, that the war department neither paid, clothed, nor victualled them. This may be exaggerated, for Napoleon disliked Dubois de Crancé as his personal opponent; but the improvident and corrupt character of the directorial government renders the charge very probable. By the exertions of Berthier, accustomed to Buonaparte's mode of arrangements, the war department soon adopted a very different face of activity.

The same department received yet additional vigour when the Consuls called to be its head the celebrated Carnot, who had returned from exile, in consequence of the fall of the Directors. He remained in office but a short time, for, being a democrat in principle, he disapproved of the personal elevation of Buonaparte; but during the period that he continued in administration, his services in restoring order in the military department, and combining the plans of the campaign with Moreau and Buonaparte, were of the highest importance.

Napoleon showed no less talent in closing the wounds of internal war, than in his other arrangements. The Chouans, under various chiefs, had disturbed the western provinces; but the despair of pardon, which drove so many malcontents to their standard, began to subside, and the liberal and accommodating measures adopted by the new Consular government, induced most to make peace with Buonaparte. This they did the more readily, that many of them believed the Chief Consul intended by degrees, and when the opportunity offered, to accomplish the restoration of the Bourbons. Many of the chiefs of the Chouans submitted to him, and afterwards supported his government. Chatillon, Suzannet, D'Autichamp, nobles and chiefs of the Royalist army, submitted at Montlucon, and their reconciliation with the government, being admitted on liberal terms, was sincerely observed by them. Bernier, rector of St Leger, who had great influence in La Vendée, also made his peace, and was afterwards made Bishop of Orleans by Buonaparte, and employed in negotiating the Concordat with the Pope.

Count Louis de Frotté, an enterprising and high-spirited young nobleman, refused for a long time to enter into terms with Buonaparte; so did another chief of the Chouans, called George Cadoudal, a peasant of the district of Morbihan, raised to the command of his countrymen, because, with great strength and dauntless courage, he combined the qualities of enterprise and sagacity. Frotté was betrayed and made prisoner in the house of Guidal, commandant at Alençon, who had pretended friendship to him, and had promised to negotiate a favourable treaty on his behalf. He and eight or nine of his officers were tried by a military commission, and condemned to be shot. They marched hand in hand to the place of execution, remained to the last in the same attitude, expressive of their partaking the same sentiments of devotion to the cause in which they suffered, and died with the utmost courage. George Cadoudal, left alone, became unable to support the civil war, and laid down his arms for a time. Buonaparte, whose policy it was to unite in the new order of things as many and as various characters as possible, not regarding what parts they had formerly played, provided they now attached themselves to his person, took great pains to gain over a man so resolute as this daring Breton. He had a personal interview with him, which he says George Cadoudal solicited; yet why he should have done so it is hard to guess, unless it were to learn whether Buonaparte had any ultimate purpose of serving the Bourbon interest. He certainly did not request the favour in order to drive any bargain for himself, since Buonaparte frankly admits, that all his promises and arguments failed to make any impression upon him; and that he parted with George, professing still to entertain opinions for which he had fought so often and so desperately.

In another instance which happened at this period, Buonaparte boasts of having vindicated the insulted rights of nations. The Senate of Hamburgh had delivered up to England Napper Tandy, Blackwell, and other Irishmen, concerned in the rebellion which had lately wasted Ireland. Buonaparte took this

up in a threatening tone, and expounded to their trembling envoy the rights of a neutral territory, in language, upon which the subsequent tragedy of the Duke d'Enghien formed a singular commentary.

While Buonaparte was thus busied in adopting measures for composing internal discord, and renewing the wasted resources of the country, those discussions were at the same time privately carrying forward, which were to determine by whom and in what way it should be governed. There is little doubt, that when Siéyes undertook the revolution of Brumaire, he would have desired for his military assistant a very different character from Buonaparte. Some general would have best suited him who possessed no knowledge beyond that of his profession, and whose ambition would have been contented to accept such share of power as corresponded to his limited views and capacity. The wily priest, however, saw, that no other coadjutor save Buonaparte could have availed him, after the return of the latter from Egypt, and was not long of experiencing that Napoleon would not be satisfied with anything short of the lion's share of the spoil.

At the very first meeting of the Consuls, the defection of Roger Ducos to the side of Buonaparte convinced Siéyes, that he would be unable to support those pretensions to the first place in the government, to which his friends had expected to see him elevated. He had reckoned on Ducos's vote for giving him the situation of First Consul; but Ducos saw better where the force and talent of the Consulate must be considered as reposed. "General," said he to Napoleon, at the first meeting of the Consular body, "the presidency belongs to you as a matter of right." Buonaparte took the chair accordingly as a thing of course. In the course of the deliberations, Siéyes had hoped to find that the General's opinions and interference would have been limited to military affairs; whereas, on the contrary, he heard him express distinctly, and support firmly, propositions on policy and finance, religion and jurisprudence. He showed, in short, so little occasion for an independent coadjutor, that Siéyes appears from this, the very first interview, to have given up all hopes of establishing a separate interest of his own, and to have seen that the Revolution was from that moment ended. On his return home, he said to those statesmen with whom he had consulted and acted preceding the 18th Brumaire, as Talleyrand, Boulay, Roederer, Chabanis, &c.—"Gentlemen, you have a Master—give yourself no farther concern about the affairs of the state—Buonaparte can and will manage them all at his own pleasure."

This declaration must have announced to those who heard it, that the direct and immediate advantages proposed by the revolution were lost; that the government no longer rested on the popular basis, but that, in a much greater degree than could have been said to have been the case during the reign of the Bourbons, the whole measures of state must in future rest upon the arbitrary pleasure of one man.

It was in the meantime necessary that some form of government should be established without delay, were it only to prevent the meeting of the two Councils, who must have resumed their authority, unless superseded by a new constitution previous to the 19th February 1800, to which day they had been prorogued. As a previous measure, the oath taken by official persons was altered from a direct acknowledgment of the constitution of the year Three, so as to express a more general profession of adherence to the cause of the French nation. How to save the wounded consciences of those who had previously taken the oath in its primitive form, no care was used, nor does any appear to have been thought necessary.

The three Consuls, and the Legislative Committees, formed themselves into a general Committee, for the purpose of organizing a constitution; and Siéyes was invited to submit to them that model, on the preparation of which he used to pique himself, and had been accustomed to receive the flattery of his friends.

He appears to have obeyed the call slowly, and to have produced his plan partially, and by fragments; probably because he was aware, that the offspring of his talents would never be accepted in its entire form, but must necessarily undergo such mutilations as might fit it for the purposes and to the pleasure of the Dictator, whose supremacy he had been compelled to announce to his party.

On being pressed by his colleagues in the committee, the metaphysical politician at length produced his full plan of the hierarchical representation, whose authority was to emanate from the choice of the people and of a Conservative Senate, which was at once to protect the laws of the commonwealth, and *absorb*, as it was termed, all furious and over-ambitious spirits, by calling them, when they distinguished themselves by any irregular exertion of power, to share the comforts and incapacities of their own body, as they say spirits of old were conjured down, and obliged to abide in the Red Sea. He then brought forward his idea of a Legislative Body, which was to vote and decide, but without debate; and his Tribune, designed to plead for, or to impeach the measures of government. These general outlines were approved, as being judged likely to preserve more stability and permanence than had been found to appertain to the constitutions, which, since 1792, had in such quick succession been adopted and abandoned.

But the idea which Sieyes entertained of lodging the executive government in a Grand Elector, who was to be the very model of a King of Lubberland, was the ruin of his plan. It was in vain, that in hopes of luring Buonaparte to accept of this office, he had, while depriving it of all real power, attached to it a large revenue, guards, honours, and rank. The heaping with such distinctions an official person, who had no other duty than to name two Consuls, who were to carry on the civil and military business of the state without his concurrence or authority, was introducing into a modern state the evils of a worn-out Asiatic empire, where the Sultan, or Mogul, or whatever he is called, lies in his Haram in obscure luxury, while the state affairs are conducted exclusively by his Viziers, or Lieutenants.

Buonaparte exclaimed against the whole concoction.—“Who,” said he, “would accept an office, of which the only duties were to fatten like a pig upon so many millions yearly?—Or what man of spirit would consent to name ministers, over whom, being named, he was not to exercise the slightest authority?—And your two Consuls for war and peace, the one surrounded with judges, churchmen, and civilians,—the other with military men and diplomatists,—on what footing of intercourse can they be said to stand respecting each other?—the one demanding money and recruits, the other refusing the supplies? A government involving such a total separation of offices necessarily connected, would be heterogeneous,—the shadow of a state, but without the efficient authority which should belong to one.”

Sieyes did not possess powers of persuasion or promptness of speech in addition to his other talents. He was silenced and intimidated, and saw his favourite Elector-General, with his two Consuls, or rather Viziers, rejected, without making much effort in their defence.

Still the system which was actually adopted, bore, in point of form, some faint resemblance to the model of Sieyes. Three Consuls were appointed; the first to hold the sole power of nominating to public offices, and right of determining on public measures; the other two were to be his indispensable counsellors. The first of these offices was designed to bring back the constitution of France to a monarchical system, while the second and third were added merely to conciliate the Republicans, who were not yet prepared for a retrograde movement.

The office of one of these supplementary Consuls was offered to Sieyes, but he declined to accept of it, and expressed his wish to retire from public life. His disappointment was probably considerable, at finding himself acting but a

second-rate part, after the success of the conspiracy which he had himself schemed; but his pride was not so great as to decline a pecuniary compensation. Buonaparte bestowed on him by far the greater part of the private treasure amassed by the ex-directors. It was said to amount to six hundred thousand francs, which Sieyes called *une poire pour la soif*; in English, a morsel to stay the stomach. He was endowed also with the fine domain and estate of Crosne; and to render the gift more acceptable, and save his delicacy, a decree was issued, compelling him to accept of this manifestation of national gratitude. The office of a senator gave him dignity; and the yearly appointment of twenty-five thousand francs annexed to it, added to the ease of his situation. In short, this celebrated metaphysician disappeared as a political person, and became, to use his own expression, *absorbed* in the pursuit of epicurean indulgences, which he covered with a veil of mystery. There is no doubt that by thus showing the greedy and mercenary turn of his nature, Sieyes, notwithstanding his abilities, lost in a great measure the esteem and reverence of his countrymen; and this was a consequence not probably unforeseen by Buonaparte, when he loaded him with wealth.

To return to the new constitution. Every species of power and faculty was heaped upon the Chief Consul, with a liberality which looked as if France, to atone for her long jealousy of those who had been the administrators of her executive power, was now determined to remove at once every obstacle which might stand in the way of Buonaparte to arbitrary power. He possessed the sole right of nominating counsellors of state, ministers, ambassadors, officers, civil and military, and almost all functionaries whatsoever. He was to propose all new laws, and take all measures for internal and external defence of the state. He commanded all the forces, of whatever description, superintended all the national relations at home and abroad, and coined the public money. In these high duties he had the advice of his brother Consuls, and also of a Council of State. But he was recognized to be independent of them all. The Consuls were to be elected for the space of ten years, and to be re-eligible.

The Abbe Sieyes's plan of dividing the people into three classes, which should each of them declare a certain number of persons eligible to certain gradations of the state, was ostensibly adopted. The lists of these eligible individuals were to be addressed by the various electoral classes to the Conservative Senate, which also was borrowed from the Abbe's model. This body, the highest and most august in the state, were to hold their places for life, and had a considerable pension attached to them. Their number was not to exceed eighty, and they were to have the power of supplying vacancies in their own body, by choosing the future senator from a list of three persons; one of them proposed by the Chief Consul, one by the Legislative Body, and one by the Tribune. Senators became for ever incapable of any other public duty. Their duty was to receive the national lists of persons eligible for official situations, and to annul such laws or measures as should be denounced to their body, as unconstitutional or impolitic, either by the Government or the Tribune. The sittings of the Senate were not public.

The New Constitution of France also adopted the Legislative Body and the Tribune proposed by the Abbe Sieyes. The duty of the Legislative Body was to take into consideration such laws as should be approved by the Tribune, and pass or refuse them by vote, but without any debate, or even any expression of their opinion.

The Tribune, on the contrary, was a deliberative body, to whom the Chief Consul, and his Council of State, with whom alone lay the initiative privilege, were to propose such laws as appeared to them desirable. These, when discussed by the Tribune, and approved of by the silent assent of the Legislative Body, passed into decrees, and became binding upon the community. The Legislative Body heard the report of the Tribune, as expressed by a deputation

from that body; and by their votes alone, but without any debate or delivery of opinion, refused or confirmed the proposal. Some of the more important acts of government, such as the proclamation of peace or war, could only take place on the motion of the Chief Consul to the Tribunal, upon their recommending the measure to the Legislative Body; and finally, upon the Legislative Commissions affirming the proposal. But the power of the Chief Consul was not much checked by this restriction; for the discussion on such subjects was only to take place on his own requisition, and always in secret committee; so that the greatest hindrance of despotism, the weight of public opinion formed upon public debate, was totally wanting.

A very slight glance at this Consular form of government is sufficient to show, that Buonaparte selected exactly as much of the ingenious constitution of Sieyes as was applicable to his own object of acquiring supreme and despotic authority, while he got rid of all, the Tribunal alone excepted, which contained, directly or indirectly, any check or balance affecting the executive power. The substitution of lists of eligible persons or candidates, to be made up by the people, instead of the popular election of actual representatives, converted into a metaphysical and abstract idea the real safeguard of liberty. It may be true, that the authority of an official person, selected from the national lists, might be said originally to emanate from the people; because, unless his name had received their sanction, he could not have been eligible. But the difference is inexpressibly great, between the power of naming a single direct representative, and that of naming a thousand persons, any of whom may be capable of being created a representative; and the popular interference in the state, which had hitherto comprehended the former privilege, was now restrained to the latter and more insignificant one. This was the main error in Sieyes's system, and the most fatal blow to liberty, whose constitutional safety can hardly exist, excepting in union with a direct and unfettered national representation, chosen by the people themselves.

All the other balances and checks which the Abbe had designed to substitute instead of that which arises from popular election, had been broken and cast away; while the fragments of the scheme that remained were carefully adjusted, so as to form the steps by which Buonaparte was to ascend to an unlimited and despotic throne. Sieyes had proposed that his Elector General should be merely a graceful termination to his edifice, like a gilded vane on the top of a steeple—a sovereign without power—a *Roi faincant*, with two Consuls to act as joint *Maires des palais*. Buonaparte, on the contrary, gave the whole executive power in the state, together with the exclusive right of proposing all new laws, to the Chief Consul, and made the others mere appendages, to be thrown aside at pleasure.

Neither were the other constitutional authorities calculated to offer effectual resistance to the engrossing authority of this all-powerful officer. All these bodies were, in fact, mere pensioners. The Senate, which met in secret, and the Legislative Body, whose lips were padlocked, were alike removed from influencing public opinion, and being influenced by it. The Tribunal, indeed, consisting of a hundred persons, retained in some sort the right of debate, and of being publicly heard. But the members of the Tribunal were selected by the Senate, not by the people, whom, except in metaphysical mockery, it could not be said to represent, any more than a bottle of distilled liquor can be said to represent the sheaf of grain which it was originally drawn from. What chance was there that, in a hundred men so chosen, there should be courage and independence enough found to oppose that primary power, by which, like a steam-engine, the whole constitution was put in motion? Such tribunes were also in danger of recollecting, that they only held their office for four years, and that the Senators had their offices for life; while a transition from the one state to the other was in general thought desirable, and could only be gained by im-

PLICIT obedience during the candidate's probation in the Tribune. Yet, slender as was the power of this Tribune body, Buonaparte showed some jealousy even of this slight appearance of freedom; although, justly considered, the Senate, the Conservative Body, and the Tribune, were but three different pipes, which, separately or altogether, uttered sound at the pleasure of him who presided at the instrument.

The spirit of France must have been much broken when this arbitrary system was adopted without debate or contradiction; and when we remember the earlier period of 1789, it is wonderful to consider how, in the space of ten years, the race of men, whose love of liberty carried them to such extravagances, seems to have become exhausted. Personal safety was now a principal object with most. They saw no alternative between absolute submission to a military chief of talent and power, and the return to anarchy and new revolutionary excesses.

During the sitting of Buonaparte's Legislative Committee, Madame de Stael expressed, to a representative of the people, her alarms on the subject of liberty. "Oh, madam," he replied, "we are arrived at an extremity in which we must not trouble ourselves about saving the principles of the Revolution, but only the lives of the men by whom the Revolution was effected."

Yet more than one exertion is said to have been made in the Committee, to obtain some modification of the supreme power of the Chief Consul, or at least some remedy in case of its being abused. Several members of the Committee which adjusted the new constitution, made, it is said, an effort to persuade Buonaparte, that, in taking possession of the office of supreme magistrate, without any preliminary election, he would evince an ambition which might prejudice him with the people; and, entreating him to be satisfied with the office of generalissimo of the armies, with full right of treating with foreign powers, invited him to set off to the frontier and resume his train of victories. "I will remain at Paris," said Buonaparte, biting his nails to the quick, as was his custom when agitated—"I will remain at Paris—I am Chief Consul."

Chenier hinted at adopting the doctrine of absorption, but was instantly interrupted—"I will have no such mummery," said Buonaparte; "blood to the knees rather."* These expressions may be exaggerated, but it is certain that, whenever there was an attempt to control his wishes, or restrict his power, such a discontented remark as intimated "that he would meddle no more in the business," was sufficient to overpower the opposition. The Committee saw no option betwixt submitting to the authority of this inflexible chief, or encountering the horrors of a bloody civil war. Thus were lost at once the fruits of the virtues, the crimes, the blood, the treasure, the mass of human misery, which, flowing from the Revolution, had agitated France for ten years; and thus, having sacrificed almost all that men hold dear, the rights of humanity themselves included, in order to obtain national liberty, her inhabitants, without having enjoyed rational freedom, or the advantages which it insures, for a single day, returned to be the vassals of a despotic government, administered by a chief whose right was only in his sword. A few reflections on what might or ought to have been Buonaparte's conduct in this crisis, naturally arise out of the subject.

We are not to expect, in the course of ordinary life, moral any more than physical miracles. There have lived men of a spirit so noble, that, in serving their country, they had no other object beyond the merit of having done so; but such men belong to a less corrupted age than ours, and have been trained in the principles of disinterested patriotism, which did not belong to France, perhaps not to Europe, in the eighteenth century. We may, therefore, take it for granted, that Buonaparte was desirous, in some shape or other, to find his own

* *Memoires de Fouché*, vol. I. p. 104.

interest in the service of his country, that his motives were a mixture of patriotism and the desire of self-advancement; and it remains to consider in what manner both objects were to be best obtained.

The first alternative was the re-establishment of the Republic, upon some better and less perishable model than those which had been successively adopted and abandoned by the French, in the several phases of the Revolution. But Buonaparte had already determined against this plan of government, and seemed unalterably convinced, that the various misfortunes and failures which had been sustained in the attempt to convert France into a republic, afforded irrefragable evidence that her natural and proper constitutional government must be monarchical. This important point settled, it remained, 1st, To select the person in whose hand the kingly power was to be intrusted. 2dly, To consider in what degree the monarchical principle should be mingled with, and qualified by, securities for the freedom of the people, and checks against the encroachments of the prince.

Having broken explicitly with the Republicans, Buonaparte had it in his power, doubtless, to have united with those who desired the restoration of the Bourbons, who, at this moment, formed a large proportion of the better classes in France. The name of the old dynasty must have brought with it great advantages. Their restoration would have at once restored peace to Europe, and in a great measure reconciled the strife of parties in France. There was no doubt of the possibility of the counter-revolution; for what was done in 1814 might have been still more easily done in 1799. Old ideas would have returned with ancient names, and at the same time security might have been given, that the restored monarch should be placed within such legal restraints as were necessary for the protection of the freedom of the subject. The principal powers of Europe, if required, would have gladly guaranteed to the French people any class of institutions which might have been thought adequate to this purpose.

But, besides that such a course cut off Buonaparte from any higher reward of his services, than were connected with the rank of a subject, the same objections to the restoration of the Bourbon family still prevailed, which we have before noticed. The extreme confusion likely to be occasioned by the conflicting claims of the restored emigrants, who had left France with all the feelings and prejudices peculiar to their birth and quality, and those of the numerous soldiers and statesmen, who had arisen to eminence during the revolution, and whose pretensions to rank and office would be urged with jealous vehemence against those who had shared the fortunes of the exiled monarch, was a powerful objection to the restoration. The question concerning the national domains, remained as embarrassing as before; for, while the sales which had been made of that property could scarce be cancelled without a severe shock to national credit, the restored Bourbons could not, on the other hand, fail to insist upon an indemnification to the spirituality, who had been stripped of their property for adherence to their religious vows, and to the nobles, whose estates had been forfeited for their adherence to the throne. It might also have been found, that, among the army, a prejudice against the Bourbons had survived their predilection for the Republic, and that although the French soldiers might see with pleasure a crown placed on the brow of their favourite general, they might be unwilling to endure the restoration of the ancient race, against whom they had long borne arms.

All these objections against attempting to recall the ancient dynasty, have weight in themselves, and may readily have appeared insuperable to Buonaparte; especially considering the conclusion to be, that if the Bourbons were found ineligible, the crown of France—with a more extended empire, and more unlimited powers—was in that case to rest with Buonaparte himself. There is no doubt that, in preferring the title of the Bourbons, founded on right, to

his own, which rested on force and opportunity alone, Buonaparte would have acted a much more noble, generous, and disinterested part, than in availing himself of circumstances to establish his own power; nay, that, philosophically speaking, such a choice might have been wiser and happier. But in the ordinary mode of viewing and acting in this world, the temptation was immense; and Buonaparte was, in some measure, unfettered by the circumstances which might have withheld some of his contemporaries from snatching at the crown that seemed to await his grasp. Whatever were the rights of the Bourbons, abstractedly considered, they were not of a kind to force themselves immediately upon the conscience of Buonaparte. He had not entered public life, was indeed a mere boy, when the general voice of France, or that which appeared such, drove the ancient race from the throne; he had acted during all his life hitherto in the service of the French government *de facto*; and it was hard to require of him, now of a sudden, to sacrifice the greatest stake which a man ever played for, to the abstract right of the king *de jure*. Candour will therefore allow, that though some spirits, of a heroic pitch of character, might, in his place, have acted otherwise, yet the conduct of Buonaparte, in availing himself, for his own advantage, of the height which he had attained by his own talents, was too natural a course of action to be loaded with censure by any one, who, if he takes the trouble to consider the extent of the temptation, must acknowledge in his heart the difficulty of resisting it.

But though we may acknowledge many excuses for the ambition which induced Buonaparte to assume the principal share of the new government, and although we were even to allow to his admirers that he became First Consul purely because his doing so was necessary to the welfare of France, our candour can carry us no farther. We cannot for an instant sanction the monstrous accumulation of authority which engrossed into his own hands all the powers of the state, and deprived the French people, from that period, of the least pretence to liberty, or power of protecting themselves from tyranny. It is in vain to urge, that they had not yet learned to make a proper use of the invaluable privileges of which he deprived them—equally in vain to say, that they consented to resign what it was not in their power to defend. It is a poor apology for theft that the person plundered knew not the value of the gem taken from him; a worse excuse for robbery, that the party robbed was disarmed and prostrate, and submitted without resistance, where to resist would have been to die. In choosing to be the head of a well-regulated and limited monarchy, Buonaparte would have consulted even his own interest better, than by preferring, as he did, to become the sole animating spirit of a monstrous despotism. The communication of common privileges, while they united discordant factions, would have fixed the attention of all on the head of the government, as their mutual benefactor. The constitutional rights which he had reserved for the crown would have been respected, when it was remembered that the freedom of the people had been put in a rational form, and its privileges rendered available by his liberality.

Such checks upon his power would have been as beneficial to himself as to his subjects. If, in the course of his reign, he had met constitutional opposition to the then immense projects of conquest, which cost so much blood and devastation, to that opposition he would have been as much indebted, as a person subject to fits of lunacy is to the bonds by which, when under the influence of his malady, he is restrained from doing mischief. Buonaparte's active spirit, withheld from warlike pursuits, would have been exercised by the internal improvement of his kingdom. The mode in which he used his power would have gilded over, as in many other cases, the imperfect nature of his title, and if he was not, in every sense, the legitimate heir of the monarchy, he might have been one of the most meritorious princes that ever ascended the throne. Had he permitted the existence of a power expressive of the national opinion to

exist, co-equal with and restrictive of his own, there would have been no occupation of Spain, no war with Russia, no imperial decrees against British commerce. The people who first felt the pressure of these violent and ruinous measures, would have declined to submit to them in the outset. The ultimate consequence—the overthrow, namely, of Napoleon himself, would not, have taken place, and he might, for aught we can see, have died on the throne of France, and bequeathed it to his posterity, leaving a reputation which could only be surpassed in lustre by that of an individual who should render similar advantages to his country, yet decline the gratification, in any degree, of his personal ambition.

In short, it must always be written down, as Buonaparte's error as well as guilt, that misusing the power which the 18th Brumaire threw into his hands, he totally destroyed the liberty of France, or, we would say, more properly, the chance which that country had of attaining a free, and, at the same time, a settled government. He might have been a patriot prince, he chose to be an usurping despot—he might have played the part of Washington, he preferred that of Cromwell.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Proceedings of Buonaparte in order to consolidate his Power—His great success—Causes that led to it.—Cambaceres and Lebrun chosen Second and Third Consuls.—Talleyrand appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Fouché Minister of Police—Their Characters.—Other Ministers nominated.—Various Changes made, in order to mark the Commencement of a new Era.—Napoleon addresses a Letter personally to the King of England—Answered by Lord Grenville.—Negotiation for Peace, that followed, speedily broken off.—Campaigns in Italy, and on the Rhine—Successes of Moreau—Censured by Napoleon for Over-caution.—The Charge considered.—The Chief Consul resolves to bring back, in Person, Victory to the French Standards in Italy—His Measures for that Purpose.

THE structure of government which Buonaparte had selected out of the broken outlines of the plan of Sieyes, being not only monarchical but despotic, it remained that its offices should be filled with persons favourable to the new order of things; and to this the attention of Buonaparte was especially turned. In order to secure the selection of the official individuals to himself, he eluded entirely the principle by which Sieyes had proposed to elaborate his national representatives out of the various signed lists of eligibility, to be made up by the three classes into which his hierarchy divided the French people. Without waiting for these lists of eligible persons, or taking any other rule but his own pleasure, and that of his councillors, the two new Consuls, Buonaparte named sixty senators; the senators named an hundred tribunes, and three hundred legislators; and thus the whole bodies of the state were filled up, by a choice emanating from the executive government, instead of being vested, more or less directly, in the people.

In availing himself of the privileges which he had usurped, the First Consul as we must now call him, showed a moderation as artful as it was conciliatory. His object was to avoid the odium of appearing to hold his rank by his military character only. He desired, on the contrary, to assemble round him a party, in which the predominant character of individuals, whatever it had hitherto been, was to be merged in that of the new system; as the statuary throws into the furnace broken fragments of bronze of every various description, without regarding their immediate appearance or form, his purpose being to unite them

by fusion, and bestow upon the mass the new shape which his art destined it to present.

With these views, Napoleon said to Sieyes, who reprobated the admission of Fouché into office and power, "We are creating a new era. Of the past, we must forget the bad, and only remember the good. Time, habits of business, and experience, have formed many able men, and modified many characters." These words may be regarded as the key-note of his whole system. Buonaparte did not care what men had been formerly, so that they were now disposed to become that which was suitable for his interest, and for which he was willing to reward them liberally. The former conduct of persons of talent, whether in politics or morality, was of no consequence, providing they were willing, now, faithfully to further and adhere to the new order of things. This prospect of immunity for the past, and reward for the future, was singularly well calculated to act upon the public mind, desirous as it was of repose, and upon that of individuals, agitated by so many hopes and fears as the Revolution had set afloat. The Consular government seemed a general place of refuge and sanctuary to persons of all various opinions, and in all various predicaments. It was only required of them, in return for the safety which it afforded, that they should pay homage to the presiding deity.

So artfully was the system of Buonaparte contrived, that each of the numerous classes of Frenchmen found something in it congenial to his habits, his feelings, or his circumstances, providing only he was willing to sacrifice to it the essential part of his political principles. To the Royalist, it restored monarchical forms, a court and a sovereign—but he must acknowledge that sovereign in Buonaparte. To the churchman, it opened the gates of the temples, removed the tyranny of the persecuting philosophers—promised in course of time a national church—but by the altar must be placed the image of Buonaparte. The Jacobin, dyed double red in murder and massacre, was welcome to safety and security from the aristocratic vengeance which he had so lately dreaded. The regicide was guaranteed against the return of the Bourbons—they who had profited by the Revolution as purchasers of national domains, were insured against their being resumed. But it was under the implied condition, that not a word was to be mentioned by those *ci-devant* democrats, of liberty or equality: the principles for which forfeitures had been made, and revolutionary tribunals erected, were henceforth never to be named. To all these parties, as to others, Buonaparte held out the same hopes under the same conditions.—"All these things will I give you, if you will kneel down and worship me." Shortly afterwards, he was enabled to place before those to whom the choice was submitted, the original temptation in its full extent—a display of the kingdoms of the earth, over which he offered to extend the empire of France, providing always he was himself acknowledged as the object of general obedience, and almost adoration.

The system of Buonaparte, as it combined great art with an apparent generosity and liberality, proved eminently successful among the people of France, when subjected to the semblance of a popular vote. The national spirit was exhausted by the changes and the sufferings, the wars and the crimes, of so many years; and in France, as in all other countries, parties, exhausted by the exertions and vicissitudes of civil war, are in the very situation where military tyranny becomes the next crisis. The rich favoured Buonaparte for the sake of protection,—the poor for that of relief,—the emigrants, in many cases, because they desired to return to France,—the men of the Revolution, because they were afraid of being banished from it;—the sanguine and courageous crowded round his standard in hope of victory,—the timid cowered behind it in the desire of safety. Add to these the vast multitude who follow the opinion of others, and take the road which lies most obvious, and is most trodden, and it is no wonder that the 18th Brumaire, and its consequences, received the gene-

ral sanction of the people. The constitution of the year Eight, or Consular Government, was approved by the suffrages of nearly four millions of citizens, —a more general approbation than any preceding system had been received with. The vote was doubtless a farce in itself, considering how many constitutions had been adopted and sworn to within so short a space; but still the numbers who expressed assent, more than doubling those votes which were obtained by the constitutions of 1793 and of the year Three, indicate the superior popularity of Buonaparte's system.

To the four millions who expressly declared their adherence to the new Consular constitution, must be added the many hundreds of thousands and millions more, who were either totally indifferent upon the form of government, providing they enjoyed peace and protection under it, or who, though abstractly preferring other rulers, were practically disposed to submit to the party in possession of the power.

Such and so extended being the principles on which Buonaparte selected the members of his government, he manifested, in choosing individuals, that wonderful penetration, by which, more perhaps than any man who ever lived, he was enabled at once to discover the person most capable of serving him, and the means of securing his attachment. Former crimes or errors made no cause of exclusion; and in several cases the alliance between the First Consul and his ministers might have been compared to the marriages between the settlers on the Spanish mainland, and the unhappy females, the refuse of great cities, sent out to recruit the colony.—“I ask thee not,” said the buccaneer to the wife he had selected from the cargo of vice, “what has been thy former conduct; but, henceforth, see thou continue faithful to me, or this,” striking his hand on his musket, “shall punish thy want of fidelity.”

For second and third Consuls, Buonaparte chose Cambaceres, a lawyer, and a member of the moderate party, with Lebrun, who had formerly co-operated with the Chancellor Maupeou. The former was employed by the Chief Consul as his organ of communication with the Revolutionists, while Lebrun rendered him the same service with the Royal party; and although, as Madame de Stael observes, they preached very different sermons on the same texts, yet they were both eminently successful in detaching from their original factions many of either class, and uniting them with this third, or government party, which was thus composed of deserters from both. The last soon became so numerous, that Buonaparte was enabled to dispense with the *bascule*, or trimming system, by which alone his predecessors, the Directors, had been enabled to support their power.

In the ministry, Buonaparte acted upon the same principle, selecting and making his own the men whose talents were most distinguished, without reference to their former conduct. Two were particularly distinguished, as men of the most eminent talents, and extensive experience. These were Talleyrand and Fouché. The former, noble by birth, and Bishop of Autun, notwithstanding his high rank in church and state, had been deeply engaged in the Revolution. He had been placed on the list of emigrants, from which his name was erased on the establishment of the Directorial government, under which he became Minister of Foreign Affairs. He resigned that office in the summer preceding 18th Brumaire; and Buonaparte, finding him at variance with the Directory, readily passed over some personal grounds of complaint which he had against him, and enlisted in his service a supple and dexterous politician, and an experienced minister; fond, it is said, of pleasure, not insensible to views of self-interest, nor too closely fettered by principle, but perhaps unequalled in ingenuity. Talleyrand was replaced in the situation of minister for foreign affairs, after a short interval, assigned for the purpose of suffering the public to forget his prominent share in the scandalous treaty with the American commissioners

and continued for a long tract of time one of the closest sharers of Buonaparte's councils.

If the character of Talleyrand bore no strong traces of public virtue or inflexible morality, that of Fouché was marked with still darker shades. He had been dipt in some of the worst transactions of the Reign of Terror, and his name is found among the agents of the dreadful crimes of that unhappy period. In the days of the Directory, he is stated to have profited by the universal peculation which was then practised, and to have amassed large sums by shares in contracts and brokerage in the public funds. To atone for the imperfections of a character stained with perfidy, venality, and indifference to human suffering, Fouché brought to Buonaparte's service a devotion, never like to fail the First Consul unless his fortunes should happen to change, and a perfect experience with all the weapons of revolutionary war, and knowledge of those who were best able to wield them. He had managed under Barras's administration the department of police; and, in the course of his agency, had become better acquainted perhaps than any man in France with all the various parties in that distracted country, the points which they were desirous of reaching, the modes by which they hoped to attain them, the character of their individual leaders, and the means to gain them over or to intimidate them. Formidable by his extensive knowledge of the revolutionary springs, and the address with which he could either put them into motion, or prevent them from operating, Fouché, in the latter part of his life, displayed a species of wisdom which came in place of morality and benevolence.

Loving wealth and power, he was neither a man of ardent passions, nor of a vengeful disposition; and though there was no scruple in his nature to withhold him from becoming an agent in the great crimes which state policy, under an arbitrary government, must often require, yet he had a prudential and constitutional aversion to unnecessary evil, and was always wont to characterize his own principle of action, by saying, that he did as little harm as he possibly could. In his mysterious and terrible office of head of the police, he had often means of granting favours, or interposing lenity in behalf of individuals, of which he gained the full credit, while the harsh measures of which he was the agent, were set down to the necessity of his situation. By adhering to these principles of moderation, he established for himself at length a character totally inconsistent with that belonging to a member of the revolutionary committee, and resembling rather that of a timid but well-disposed servant, who, in executing his master's commands, is desirous to mitigate as much as possible their effect on individuals. It is, upon the whole, no wonder, that although Sieyes objected to Fouché, from his want of principle, and Talleyrand was averse to him from jealousy, interference, and personal enmity, Napoleon chose, nevertheless, to retain in the confidential situation of minister of police, the person by whom that formidable office had been first placed on an effectual footing.

Of the other ministers, it is not necessary to speak in detail. Cambacères retained the situation of Minister of Justice, for which he was well qualified; and the celebrated mathematician, La Place, was preferred to that of the Interior, for which he was not, according to Buonaparte's report, qualified at all. Berthier, as we have already seen, filled the war department, and shortly afterwards Carnot; and Gaudin administered the finances with credit to himself. Forfait, a naval architect of eminence, replaced Bourdon in the helpless and hopeless department of the French Admiralty.

A new constitution having been thus formed, and the various branches of duty distributed with much address among those best capable of discharging them, other changes were at the same time made, which were designed to mark that a new era was commenced, in which all former prejudices were to be abandoned and done away.

We have noticed that one of the first acts of the Provisional Government had been to new-modify the national oath, and generalize its terms, so that they should be no longer confined to the constitution of the year Three, but should apply to that which was about to be framed, or to any other which might be produced by the same authority. Two subsequent alterations in the constitution, which passed without much notice, so much was the revolutionary or republican spirit abated, tended to show that farther changes were impending, and that the Consular Republic was speedily to adopt the name, as it already had the essence, of a monarchy. It was scarce three months since the President of the Directory had said to the people, on the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille,—“ Royalty shall never raise its head again. We shall no more behold individuals boasting a title from Heaven, to oppress the earth with more ease and security, and who considered France as their private patrimony, Frenchmen as their subjects, and the laws as the expression of their good will and pleasure.” Yet now, in contradiction to this sounding declamation, the national oath, expressing hatred to royalty, was annulled, under the pretext that the Republic, being universally acknowledged, had no occasion for the guard of such disclamations.

In like manner, the public observance of the day on which Louis XVI. had suffered decapitation, was formally abolished. Buonaparte, declining to pass a judgment on the action as just, politic, or useful, pronounced that, in any event, it could only be regarded as a national calamity, and was therefore in a moral, as well as a political sense, an unfit epoch for festive celebration. An expression of the First Consul to Sieyes was also current at the same time, which, although Buonaparte may not have used it, has been generally supposed to express his sentiments. Sieyes had spoken of Louis under the established phrase of the Tyrant. “ He was no tyrant,” Buonaparte replied ; “ had he been such, I should have been a subaltern officer of artillery, and you, Monsieur l’Abbé, would have been still saying mass.”

A third sign of approaching change, or rather of the approaching return to the ancient system of government under a different chief, was the removal of the First Consul from the apartments in the Luxembourg Palace, occupied by the Directors, to the royal residence of the Tuilleries. Madame de Stael beheld the entrance of this fortunate soldier into the princely residence of the Bourbons. He was already surrounded by a vassal crowd, eager to pay him the homage which the inhabitants of those splendid halls had so long claimed as their due, that it seemed to be consistent with the place, and to become the right of this new inhabitant. The doors were thrown open with a bustle and violence, expressive of the importance of the occasion. But the hero of the scene, in ascending the magnificent staircase, up which a throng of courtiers followed him, seemed totally indifferent to all around, his features bearing only a general expression of indifference to events, and contempt for mankind.

The first measures of Buonaparte’s new government, and the expectation attached to his name, had already gone some length in restoring domestic quiet ; but he was well aware that much more must be done to render that quiet permanent ; that the external relations of France with Europe must be attended to without delay ; and that the French expected from him either the conclusion of an honourable peace, or the restoration of victory to their national banners. It was necessary, too, that advances towards peace should in the first place be made, in order, if they were unsuccessful, that a national spirit should be excited, which might reconcile the French to the renewal of the war with fresh energy.

Hitherto, in diplomacy, it had been usual to sound the way for opening treaties of peace by obscure and almost unaccredited agents, in order that the party willing to make propositions might not subject themselves to a haughty and insulting answer, or have their desire of peace interpreted as a confession of

weakness. Buonaparte went into the opposite extreme, and addressed the King of England in a personal epistle. This letter, like that to the Archduke Charles, during the campaign of 1797, intimates Buonaparte's affectation of superiority to the usual forms of diplomacy, and his pretence to a character determined to emancipate itself from rules only designed for mere ordinary men. But the manner of the address was in bad taste, and ill calculated to obtain credit for his being sincere in the proposal of peace. He was bound to know so much of the constitutional authority of the monarch whom he addressed, as to be aware that George III. would not, and could not, contract any treaty personally, but must act by the advice of those ministers whose responsibility was his guarantee to the nation at large. The terms of the letter set forth, as usual, the blessings of peace, and urged the propriety of its being restored; propositions which could not admit of dispute in the abstract, but which admit much discussion when coupled with unreasonable or inadmissible conditions.

The answer transmitted by Lord Grenville, in the forms of diplomacy, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, dwelt on the aggressions of France, declared that the restoration of the Bourbons would have been the best security for their sincerity, but disavowed all right to dictate to France in her internal concerns. Some advances were made to a specific treaty; and it is probable that England might at that period have obtained the same or better terms than she afterwards got by the treaty of Amiens. It may be added, that the moderate principles expressed by the Consular government, might, in the infancy of his power, and in a moment of considerable doubt, have induced Buonaparte to make sacrifices, to which, triumphant and established, he would not condescend. But the possession of Egypt, which Buonaparte must have insisted on, were it only for his own reputation, was likely to be an insuperable difficulty. The conjuncture also appeared to the English ministers propitious for carrying on the war. Italy had been recovered, and the Austrian army, to the number of 140,000, were menacing Savoy, and mustering on the Rhine. Buonaparte, in the check received before Acre, had been found not absolutely invincible. The exploits of Suwarrow over the French were recent, and had been decisive. The state of the interior of France was well known; and it was conceived, that though this successful general had climbed into the seat of supreme power which he found unoccupied, yet that two strong parties, of which the Royalists objected to his person, the Republicans to his form of government, could not fail, the one or other, to deprive him of his influence.

The treaty was finally broken off, on the score that there was great reason to doubt Buonaparte's sincerity; and, supposing that were granted, there was at least equal room to doubt the stability of a power so hastily acknowledged, and seeming to contain in itself the principles of decay. There may be a difference of opinion in regard to Buonaparte's sincerity in the negotiation, but there can be none as to the reality of his joy at its being defeated. The voice which summoned him to war was that which sounded sweetest in his ears, since it was always followed by exertion and by victory. He had been personally offended, too, by the allusion to the legitimate rights of the Bourbons, and indulged his resentment by pasquinades in the *Moniteur*. A supposed letter from the last descendant of the Stuart family appeared there, congratulating the King of Britain on his acceding to the doctrine of legitimacy, and summoning him to make good his principles, by an abdication of his crown in favour of the lineal heir.

The external situation of France had, as we before remarked, been considerably improved by the consequences of the battle of Zurich, and the victories of Moreau. But the Republic derived yet greater advantages from the breach between the Emperors of Austria and Russia. Paul, naturally of an uncertain temper, and offended by the management of the last campaign, in which Korsakow had been defeated, and Suwarrow checked, in consequence of their

being unsupported by the Austrian army, had withdrawn his troops, so distinguished for their own bravery as well as for the talents of their leader, from the seat of war. But the Austrians, possessing a firmness of character undismayed by defeat, and encouraged by the late success of their arms under the veteran Melas, had made such gigantic exertions as to counterbalance the loss of their Russian confederates.

Their principal force was in Italy, and it was on the Italian frontier that they meditated a grand effort, by which, supported by the British fleet, they proposed to reduce Genoa, and penetrate across the Var into Provence, where existed a strong body of Royalists ready to take arms, under the command of General Willot, an emigrant officer. It was said the celebrated Pichegru, who, escaped from Guiana, had taken refuge in England, was also with this army, and was proposed as a chief leader of the expected insurrection.

To execute this plan, Melas was placed at the head of an army of 140,000 men. This army was quartered for the winter in the plains of Piedmont, and waited but the approach of spring to commence operations.

Opposed to them, and occupying the country betwixt Genoa and the Var, lay a French army of 40,000 men; the relics of those who had been repeatedly defeated in Italy by Suwarrow. They were quartered in a poor country, and the English squadron, which blockaded the coast, was vigilant in preventing any supplies from being sent to them. Distress was therefore considerable, and the troops were in proportion dispirited and disorganized. Whole corps abandoned their position, contrary to orders; and with drums beating, and colours flying, returned into France. A proclamation from Napoleon was almost alone sufficient to remedy these disorders. He called on the soldiers, and particularly those corps who had formerly distinguished themselves under his command in his Italian campaigns, to remember the confidence he had once placed in them. The scattered troops returned to their duty, as war-horses when dispersed are said to rally and form ranks at the mere sound of the trumpet. Massena, an officer, eminent for his acquaintance with the mode of carrying on war in a mountainous country, full of passes and strong positions, was intrusted with the command of the Italian army, which Buonaparte resolved to support in person with the army of reserve.

The French army upon the Rhine possessed as great a superiority over the Austrians, as Melas, on the Italian frontier, enjoyed over Massena. Moreau was placed in the command of a large army, augmented by a strong detachment from that of General Brune, now no longer necessary for the protection of Holland, and by the army of Helvetia, which, after the defeat of Korsakow, was not farther required for the defence of Switzerland. In bestowing this great charge on Moreau, the First Consul showed himself superior to the jealousy which might have dissuaded meaner minds from intrusting a rival, whose military skill was often compared with his own, with such an opportunity of distinguishing himself. But Buonaparte, in this and other cases, preferred the employing and profiting by the public service of men of talents, and especially men of military eminence, to any risk which he could run from their rivalry. He had the just confidence in his own powers, never to doubt his supremacy, and trusted to the influence of discipline, and the love of their profession, which induces generals to accept of command even under administrations of which they disapprove. In this manner he rendered dependant upon himself even those officers, who, averse to the Consular form of government, inclined to republican principles. Such were Massena, Brune, Jourdan, Lecourbe, and Championnet. He took care at the same time, by changing the commands intrusted to them, to break off all combinations or connexions which they might have formed for a new alteration of the government.

General Moreau was much superior in numbers to Kray, the Austrian who commanded on the Rhine, and received orders to resume the offensive. He

was cautious in his tactics, though a most excellent officer, and was startled at the plan sent him by Buonaparte, which directed him to cross the Rhine at Schaffhausen, and, marching on Ulm with his whole force, place himself in the rear of the greater part of the Austrian army. This was one of those schemes, fraught with great victories or great reverses, which Buonaparte delighted to form, and which often requiring much sacrifice of men, occasioned his being called by those who loved him not, a general at the rate of ten thousand men per day. Such enterprises resemble desperate passes in fencing, and must be executed with the same decisive resolution with which they are formed. Few even of Buonaparte's best generals could be trusted with the execution of his master-strokes in tactics, unless under his own immediate superintendence.

Moreau invaded Germany on a more modified plan; and a series of marches, counter-marches, and desperate battles ensued, in which General Kray, admirably supported by the Archduke Ferdinand, made a gallant defence against superior numbers.

In Buonaparte's account of this campaign he blames Moreau for hesitation and timidity in following up the advantages which he obtained. Yet to a less severe, perhaps to a more impartial judge, Moreau's success might seem satisfactory, since, crossing the Rhine in the end of April, he had his head-quarters at Augsburg upon the 15th July, ready either to co-operate with the Italian army, or to march into the heart of the Austrian territory. Nor can it be denied that, during this whole campaign, Moreau kept in view, as a principal object, the protecting the operations of Buonaparte in Italy, and saving that chief, in his dauntless and desperate invasion of the Milanese territory, from the danger which might have ensued, had Kray found an opportunity of opening a communication with the Austrian army in Italy, and despatching troops to its support.

It may be remarked of these two great generals, that, as enterprise was the characteristic of Buonaparte's movements, prudence was that of Moreau's; and it is not unusual, even when there occur no other motives for rivals undervaluing each other, that the enterprising judge the prudent to be timid, and the prudent account the enterprising rash.

It is not ours to decide upon professional questions between men of such superior talents; and, having barely alluded to the topic, we leave Moreau at Augsburg, where he finally concluded an armistice with General Kray, as a consequence of that which Buonaparte had established in Italy after the battle of Marengo. Thus much, therefore, is due in justice to Moreau. His campaign was, on the whole, crowned in its results with distinguished success. And when it is considered, that he was to manœuvre both with reference to the safety of the First Consul's operations and his own, it may be doubted whether Buonaparte would, at the time, have thanked him for venturing on more hazardous measures; the result of which might have been either to obtain more brilliant victory for the army of the Rhine, in the event of success, or, should they have miscarried, to have ensured the ruin of the army of Italy, as well as of that commanded by Moreau himself. There must have been a wide difference between the part which Moreau ought to act as subsidiary to Buonaparte, (to whom it will presently be seen he despatched a reinforcement of from fifteen to twenty thousand men,) and that which Buonaparte, in obedience to his daring genius, might have himself thought it right to perform. The Commander-in-chief may venture much on his own responsibility, which must not be hazarded by a subordinate general, whose motions ought to be regulated upon the general plan of the campaign.

We return to the operations of Napoleon during one of the most important campaigns of his life, and in which he added—if that were still possible—to the high military reputation he had acquired.

In committing the charge of the campaign upon the Rhine to Moreau, the

First Consul had reserved for himself the task of bringing back victory to the French standards, on the fields in which he won his earliest laurels. His plan of victory again included a passage of the Alps, as boldly and unexpectedly as in 1795, but in a different direction. That earlier period had this resemblance to the present, that, on both occasions, the Austrians menaced Genoa; but in 1800, it was only from the Italian frontier and the Col de Tende, whereas, in 1795, the enemy were in possession of the mountains of Savoy, above Genoa. Switzerland too, formerly neutral, and allowing no passage for armies, was now as open to the march of French troops as any of their own provinces, and of this Buonaparte determined to avail himself. He was aware of the Austrian plan of taking Genoa and entering Provence; and he formed the daring resolution to put himself at the head of the army of reserve, surmount the line of the Alps, even where they are most difficult of access, and, descending into Italy, place himself in the rear of the Austrian army, interrupt their communications, carry off their magazines, parks, and hospitals, coop them up betwixt his own army and that of Massena, which was in their front, and compel them to battle, in a situation where defeat must be destruction. But to accomplish this daring movement, it was necessary to march a whole army over the highest chain of mountains in Europe, by roads which afford but a dangerous passage to the solitary traveller, and through passes where one man can do more to defend, than ten to force their way. Artillery was to be carried through sheep-paths and over precipices impracticable to wheel carriages; ammunition and baggage were to be transported at the same disadvantages; and provisions were to be conveyed through a country poor in itself, and inhabited by a nation which had every cause to be hostile to France, and might therefore be expected prompt to avail themselves of any opportunity which should occur of revenging themselves for her late aggressions.

The strictest secrecy was necessary, to procure even the opportunity of attempting this audacious plan of operations; and to ensure this secrecy, Buonaparte had recourse to a singular mode of deceiving the enemy. It was made as public as possible, by orders, decrees, proclamations, and the like, that the First Consul was to place himself at the head of the army of reserve, and that it was to assemble at Dijon. Accordingly, a numerous staff was sent to that place, and much apparent bustle took place in assembling six or seven thousand men there, with great pomp and fracas. These, as the spies of Austria truly reported to their employers, were either conscripts, or veterans unfit for service; and caricatures were published of the First Consul reviewing troops composed of children and disabled soldiers, which was ironically termed his army of reserve. When an army so composed was reviewed by the First Consul himself with great ceremony, it impressed a general belief that Buonaparte was only endeavouring, by making a show of force, to divert the Austrians from their design upon Genoa, and thus his real purpose was effectually concealed. Bulletins, too, were privately circulated by the agents of police, as if scattered by the Royalists, in which specious arguments were used to prove that the French army of reserve neither did, nor could exist—and these also were designed to withdraw attention from the various points on which it was at the very moment collecting.

The pacification of the west of France had placed many good troops at Buonaparte's disposal, which had previously been engaged against the Chouans; the quiet state of Paris permitted several regiments to be detached from the capital. New levies were made with the utmost celerity; and the divisions of the army of reserve were organized separately, and at different places of rendezvous, but ready to form a junction when they should receive the signal for commencing operations.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Chief Consul leaves Paris on 6th May 1800—Has an Interview with Neckar at Geneva on 8th—Arrives at Lausanne on the 13th—Various corps put in motion to cross the Alps.—Napoleon, at the head of the Main Army, marches on the 15th, and ascends Mont St Bernard—Difficulties of the march surmounted.—On the 16th, the Van-guard takes possession of Aosta.—Fortress and Town of Bard threaten to baffle the whole Plan—The Town is captured—and Napoleon contrives to send his Artillery through it, under the fire of the Fort, his Infantry and Cavalry passing over the Albaredo.—Lannes carries Ivrea.—Recapitulation.—Operations of the Austrian General Melas—At the commencement of the Campaign Melas advances towards Genoa—Many Actions betwixt him and Massena.—In March, Lord Keith blockades Genoa.—Melas compelled to retreat from Genoa—Enters Nice—Recalled from thence by the news of Napoleon's having crossed Mont St Bernard—Genoa surrenders—Buonaparte enters Milan—Battle of Montebello, and Victory of the French—The Chief Consul is joined by Dessaix on the 11th June.—Great Battle of Marengo on the 14th, and complete Victory of the French—Death of Dessaix—Capitulation on the 15th, by which Genoa, &c., are yielded to the French.—Napoleon returns to Paris on the 2d July, and is received with all the acclamations due to a great Conqueror.

On the 6th of May 1800, seeking to renew the fortunes of France, now united with his own, the Chief Consul left Paris, and, having reviewed the pretended army of reserve at Dijon on the 7th, arrived on the 8th at Geneva. Here he had an interview with the celebrated financier Neckar. There was always doomed to be some misunderstanding between Buonaparte and this accomplished family. Madame de Stael believed that Buonaparte spoke to her father with confidence on his future prospects; while the First Consul affirms that Neckar seemed to expect to be intrusted with the management of the French finances, and that they parted with mutual indifference, if not dislike. Napoleon had a more interesting conversation with General Marescot, despatched to survey Mont Bernard, and who had, with great difficulty, ascended as far as the convent of the Chartreux. "Is the route practicable?" said Buonaparte.—"It is barely possible to pass," replied the engineer.—"Let us set forward then," said Napoleon, and the extraordinary march was commenced.

On the 13th, arriving at Lausanne, Buonaparte joined the van of his real army of reserve, which consisted of six effective regiments, commanded by the celebrated Lannes. These corps, together with the rest of the troops intended for the expedition, had been assembled from their several positions by forced marches. Carnot, the minister at war, attended the First Consul at Lausanne, to report to him that 15,000, or from that to the number of 20,000 men, detached from Moreau's army, were in the act of descending on Italy by St Gothard, in order to form the left wing of his army. The whole army, in its various divisions, was now united under the command of Berthier nominally, as General-in-chief, though in reality under that of the First Consul himself. This was in compliance with a regulation of the Constitution, which rendered it inconsistent for the First Consul to command in person. It was a form which Buonaparte at present evaded, and afterwards laid aside; thinking truly, that the name, as well as office of Generalissimo, was most fittingly vested in his own person, since, though it might not be the loftiest of his titles, it was that which best expressed his power. The army might amount to 60,000 men, but one-third of the number were conscripts.

During the interval between the 15th and 18th of May, all the columns of the French army were put into motion to cross the Alps. Turreau, at the head of

5000 men, directed his march by Mount Cenis, on Exilles and Susa. A similar division, commanded by Chabran, took the route of the Little St Bernard. Buonaparte himself, on the 15th, at the head of the main body of his army, consisting of 30,000 men and upwards, marched from Lausanne to the little village called St Pierre, at which point there ended everything resembling a practicable road. An immense, and apparently inaccessible mountain, reared its head among general desolation and eternal frost; while precipices, glaciers, ravines, and a boundless extent of faithless snows, which the slightest concussion of the air converts into avalanches capable of burying armies in their descent, appeared to forbid access to all living things but the chamois, and his scarce less wild pursuer. Yet foot by foot, and man by man, did the French soldiers proceed to ascend this formidable barrier, which Nature had erected in vain to limit human ambition. The view of the valley, emphatically called "of Desolation," where nothing is to be seen but snow and sky, had no terrors for the First Consul and his army. They advanced up paths hitherto only practised by hunters, or here and there a hardy pedestrian, the infantry loaded with their arms, and in full military equipment, the cavalry leading their horses. The musical bands played from time to time at the head of the regiments, and, in places of unusual difficulty, the drums beat a charge, as if to encourage the soldiers to encounter the opposition of Nature herself. The artillery, without which they could not have done service, were deposited in trunks of trees hollowed out for the purpose. Each was dragged by a hundred men, and the troops, making it a point of honour to bring forward their guns, accomplished this severe duty, not with cheerfulness only, but with enthusiasm. The carriages were taken to pieces, and harnessed on the backs of mules, or committed to the soldiers, who relieved each other in the task of bearing them with levers; and the ammunition was transported in the same manner. While one half of the soldiers were thus engaged, the others were obliged to carry the muskets, cartridge-boxes, knapsacks, and provisions of their comrades, as well as their own. Each man, so loaded, was calculated to carry from sixty to seventy pounds weight, up icy precipices, where a man totally without encumbrance could ascend but slowly. Probably no troops save the French could have endured the fatigue of such a march; and no other general than Buonaparte would have ventured to require it at their hand.

He set out a considerable time after the march had begun, alone, excepting his guide. He is described by the Swiss peasant who attended him in that capacity, as wearing his usual simple dress, a grey surtout, and three-cornered hat. He travelled in silence, save a few short and hasty questions about the country, addressed to his guide from time to time. When these were answered, he relapsed into silence. There was a gloom on his brow, corresponding with the weather, which was wet and dismal. His countenance had acquired, during his Eastern campaigns, a swart complexion, which added to his natural severe gravity, and the Swiss peasant who guided him felt fear as he looked on him.* Occasionally his route was stopt by some temporary obstacle occasioned by a halt in the artillery or baggage; his commands on such occasions were peremptorily given, and instantly obeyed, his very look seeming enough to silence all objection, and remove every difficulty.

The army now arrived at that singular convent, where, with courage equal to their own, but flowing from a much higher source, the monks of St Bernard

* Apparently the guide who conducted him from the Grand Chartreux found the Chief Consul in better humour, for Buonaparte said he conversed freely with him, and expressed some wishes with respect to a little farm, &c. which he was able to gratify. To his guide from Martigny to St Pierre, he was also liberal; but the only specimen of his conversation which the latter remembered, was, when, shaking the rain-water from his hat, he exclaimed—"There, see what I have done in your mountains—spoiled my new hat. Pahaw, I will find another on the other side." See, for these and other interesting anecdotes, Mr Tennent's *Tour through the Netherlands, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, &c.*

have fixed their dwellings among the everlasting snows; that they may afford succour and hospitality to the forlorn travellers in those dreadful wastes. Hitherto the soldiers had had no refreshment, save when they dipt a morsel of biscuit amongst the snow. The good fathers of the convent, who possess considerable magazines of provisions, distributed bread and cheese, and a cup of wine, to each soldier as he passed, which was more acceptable in their situation, than, according to one who shared their fatigues,* would have been the gold of Mexico.

The descent on the other side of Mont St Bernard was as difficult to the infantry as the ascent had been, and still more so to the cavalry. It was, however, accomplished without any material loss, and the army took up their quarters for the night, after having marched fourteen French leagues. The next morning, 16th May, the vanguard took possession of Aosta, a village of Piedmont, from which extends the valley of the same name, watered by the river Dora, a country pleasant in itself, but rendered delightful by its contrast with the horrors which had been left behind.

Thus was achieved the celebrated passage of Mont St Bernard, on the particulars of which we have dwelt the more willingly, because, although a military operation of importance, they do not involve the unwearied details of human slaughter, to which our narrative must now return.

Where the opposition of Nature to Napoleon's march appeared to cease, that of man commenced. A body of Austrians at Chatillon were overpowered and defeated by Lannes; but the strong fortress of Bard offered more serious opposition. This little citadel is situated upon an almost perpendicular rock, rising out of the river Dora, at a place where the valley of Aosta is rendered so very narrow by the approach of two mountains to each other, that the fort and walled town of Bard entirely close up the entrance. This formidable obstacle threatened for the moment to shut up the French in a valley, where their means of subsistence must have been speedily exhausted. General Lannes made a desperate effort to carry the fort by assault; but the advanced guard of the attacking party were destroyed by stones, musketry, and hand-grenades, and the attempt was relinquished.

Buonaparte in person went now to reconnoitre, and for that purpose ascended a huge rock called Albaredo, being a precipice on the side of one of the mountains which form the pass, from the summit of which he could look down into the town, and into the fortress. He detected a possibility of taking the town by storm, though he judged the fort was too strong to be obtained by a coup-de-main. The town was accordingly carried by escalade; but the French who obtained possession of it had little cover from the artillery of the fort, which fired furiously on the houses where they endeavoured to shelter themselves, and which the Austrians might have entirely demolished but for respect to the inhabitants. Meanwhile, Buonaparte availed himself of the diversion to convey a great part of his army in single files, horse as well as foot, by a precarious path formed by the pioneers over the tremendous Albaredo, and so down on the other side, in this manner avoiding the cannon of Fort Bard.

Still a most important difficulty remained. It was impossible, at least without great loss of time, to carry the French artillery over the Albaredo, while, without artillery, it was impossible to move against the Austrians, and every hope of the campaign must be given up.

In the mean time, the astonished commandant of the fort, to whom the apparition of this immense army was like enchantment, despatched messenger after messenger to warn Melas, then lying before Genoa, that a French army of 30,000 men and upwards, descending from the Alps by ways hitherto deemed

* Joseph Petit, Fourrier des grenadiers de la garde, author of *Marengo, ou Campagne d'Italie*, &c. &c. ix.

impracticable for military movements, had occupied the valley of Aosta, and were endeavouring to debouche by a path of steps cut in the Albaredo. But he pledged himself to his commander-in-chief, that not a single gun or ammunition waggon should pass through the town; and as it was impossible to drag these along the Albaredo, he concluded, that, being without his artillery, Buonaparte would not venture to descend into the plain.

But while the commandant of Bard thus argued, he was mistaken in his premises, though right in his inference. The artillery of the French army had already passed through the town of Bard, and under the guns of the citadel, without being discovered to have done so. This important manœuvre was accomplished by previously laying the street with dung and earth, over which the pieces of cannon, concealed under straw and branches of trees, were dragged by men in profound silence. The garrison, though they did not suspect what was going on, fired nevertheless occasionally upon some vague suspicion, and killed and wounded artillerymen in sufficient number to show it would have been impossible to pass under a severe and sustained discharge from the ramparts. It seems singular that the commandant had kept up no intelligence with the town. Any signal previously agreed upon—a light shown in a window, for example—would have detected such a stratagem:

A division of conscripts, under General Chabran, was left to reduce Fort Bard, which continued to hold out, until, at the expense of great labour, batteries were established on the top of the Albaredo, by which it was commanded, and a heavy gun placed on the steeple of the church, when it was compelled to surrender. It is not fruitless to observe, that the resistance of this small place, which had been overlooked or undervalued in the plan of the campaign, was very nearly rendering the march over Mont St Bernard worse than useless, and might have occasioned the destruction of all the Chief Consul's army. So little are even the most distinguished generals able to calculate with certainty upon all the chances of war.

From this dangerous pass, the vanguard of Buonaparte now advanced down the valley to Ivrea, where Lannes carried the town by storm, and a second time combated and defeated the Austrian division which had defended it, when reinforced and situated on a strong position at Romano. The roads to Turin and Milan were now alike open to Buonaparte—he had only to decide which he chose to take. Meanwhile he made a halt of four days at Ivrea, to refresh the troops after their fatigues, and to prepare them for future enterprises.

During this space, the other columns of his army were advancing to form a junction with that of the main body, according to the plan of the campaign. Tureau, who had passed the Alps by the route of Mont Cenis, had taken the forts of Susa and La Brunette. On the other hand, the large corps detached by Carnot from Moreau's army, were advancing by Mount St Gothard and the Simplon, to support the operations of the First Consul, of whose army they were to form the left wing. But ere we prosecute the account of Buonaparte's movements during this momentous campaign, it is necessary to trace the previous operations of Melas, and the situation in which that Austrian general now found himself.

It has been already stated, that, at the commencement of this campaign of 1800, the Austrians entertained the highest hopes that their Italian army, having taken Genoa and Nice, might penetrate into Provence by crossing the frontier at the Var, and perhaps make themselves masters of Toulon and Marseilles. To realize these hopes, Melas, having left in Piedmont a sufficient force, as he deemed it, to guard the passes of the Alps, had advanced towards Genoa, which Massena prepared to cover and defend. A number of severe and desperate actions took place between these generals; but being a war of posts, and fought in a very mountainous and difficult country, it was impossible by any skill of

combination to ensure on any occasion more than partial success, since co-operation of movements upon a great and extensive scale was prohibited by the character of the ground. There was much hard fighting, however, in which, though more of the Austrians were slain, yet the loss was most severely felt by the French, whose numbers were inferior.

In the month of March, the English fleet, under Lord Keith, appeared, as we have already hinted, before Genoa, and commenced a blockade, which strictly prevented access to the port to all vessels loaded with provisions, or other necessities, for the besieged city.

On the 6th of April, Melas, by a grand movement, took Vado, and intersected the French line. Suchet, who commanded Massena's left wing, was cut off from that general, and thrown back on France. Marches, manœuvres, and bloody combats, followed each other in close detail; but the French, though obtaining advantages in several of the actions, could never succeed in restoring the communication between Suchet and Massena. Finally, while the former retreated towards France, and took up a line on Borghetta, the latter was compelled to convert his army into a garrison, and to shut himself up in Genoa, or at least encamp in a position close under its ramparts. Melas, in the meantime, approached the city more closely, when Massena, in a desperate sally, drove the Austrians from their advanced posts, forced them to retreat, made prisoners twelve hundred men, and carried off some warlike trophies. But the French were exhausted by their very success, and obliged to remain within, or under the walls of the city, where the approach of famine began to be felt. Men were already compelled to have recourse to the flesh of horses, dogs, and other unclean animals, and it was seen that the place must soon be necessarily obliged to surrender.

Satisfied with the approaching fall of Genoa, Melas, in the beginning of May, left the prosecution of the blockade to General Ott, and moved himself against Suchet, whom he drove before him in disorder, and who, overborne by numbers, retreated towards the French frontier. On the 11th of May, Melas entered Nice, and thus commenced the purposed invasion of the French frontier. On the 14th, the Austrians again attacked Suchet, who now had concentrated his forces upon the Var, in hopes to protect the French territory. Finding this a more difficult task than he expected, Melas next prepared to pass the Var higher up, and thus to turn the position occupied by Suchet.

But on the 21st, the Austrian veteran received intelligence which put a stop to all his operations against Suchet, and recalled him to Italy to face a much more formidable antagonist. Tidings arrived that the First Consul of France had crossed St Bernard, had extricated himself from the valley of Aosta, and was threatening to over-run Piedmont and the Milanese territory. These tidings were as unexpected as embarrassing. The artillery, the equipage, the provisions of Melas, together with his communications with Italy, were all at the mercy of this unexpected invader, who, though his force was not accurately known, must have brought with him an army more than adequate to destroy the troops left to guard the frontier; who, besides, were necessarily divided, and exposed to be beaten in detail. Yet, if Melas marched back into Piedmont against Buonaparte, he must abandon the attack upon Suchet, and raise the blockade of Genoa, when that important city was just on the eve of surrender.

Persevering in the belief that the French army of reserve could not exceed twenty thousand men, or thereabouts, in number, and supposing that the principal, if not the sole object of the First Consul's daring irruption, was to raise the siege of Genoa, and disconcert the invasion of Provence, Melas resolved on marching himself against Buonaparte with such forces, as, united with those he had left in Italy, might be of power to face the French army, according to his computation of its probable strength. At the same time, he determined to leave

before Genoa an army sufficient to insure its fall, and a corps of observation in front of Suchet, by means of which he might easily resume his plans against that general, so soon as the Chief Consul should be defeated or driven back.

The corps of observation already mentioned was under the command of General Ellsnitz, strongly posted upon the Roje, and secured by entrenchments. It served at once to watch Suchet, and to cover the siege of Genoa from any attempts to relieve the city, which might be made in the direction of France.

Massena, in the meantime, no sooner perceived the besieging army weakened by the departure of Melas, than he conceived the daring plan of a general attack on the forces of Ott, who was left to carry on the siege. The attempt was unfortunate. The French were defeated, and Soult, who had joined Massena, was wounded and made a prisoner. Yet Genoa still held out. An officer had found his way into the place, brought intelligence of Buonaparte's descent upon Piedmont, and inspired all with a new spirit of resistance. Still, however, extreme want prevailed in the city, and the hope of deliverance seemed distant. The soldiers received little food, the inhabitants less, the Austrian prisoners, of whom they had about 8000 in Genoa, almost none.* At length, the situation of things seemed desperate. The numerous population of Genoa rose in the extremity of their despair, and called for a surrender. Buonaparte, they said, was not wont to march so slowly; he would have been before the walls sooner, if he was to appear at all; he must have been defeated or driven back by the superior force of Melas. They demanded the surrender of the place, therefore, which Massena no longer found himself in a condition to oppose.

Yet could that brave general have suspended this measure a few hours longer, he would have been spared the necessity of making it at all. General Ott had just received commands from Melas to raise the blockade with all despatch, and to fall back upon the Po, in order to withstand Buonaparte, who, in unexpected strength, was marching upon Milan. The Austrian staff-officer, who brought the order, had just received his audience of General Ott, when General Andrieux, presenting himself on the part of Massena, announced the French general's desire to surrender the place, if his troops were permitted to march out with their arms. There was no time to debate upon terms; and those granted to Massena by Melas were so unusually favourable, that perhaps they should have made him aware of the precarious state of the besieging army. He was permitted to evacuate Genoa without laying down his arms, and the convention was signed 5th June 1800. Meantime, at this agitating and interesting period, events of still greater importance than those which concerned the fate of the once princely Genoa, were taking place with frightful rapidity.

Melas, with about one half of his army, had retired from his operations in the Genoese territory, and retreated on Turin by the way of Coni, where he fixed his head-quarters, expecting that Buonaparte would either advance to possess himself of the capital of Piedmont, or that he would make an effort to relieve Genoa. In the first instance, Melas deemed himself strong enough to receive the First Consul; in the second, to pursue him; and in either, to assemble such numerous forces as might harass and embarrass either his advance or his retreat. But Buonaparte's plan of the campaign was different from what Melas had anticipated. He had formed the resolution to pass the rivers Sesia and Tesino, and thus leaving Turin and Melas behind him, to push straight for Milan, and form a junction with the division of about 20,000 men, detached from the right wing of Moreau's army, which, commanded by Moncey, were on their road to join him, having crossed the mountains by the route of St Gothard. It was necessary, however, to disguise his purpose from the sagacious veteran.

* Napoleon says, that Massena proposed to General Ott to send in provisions to feed these unhappy men, pledging his honour they should be used to no other purpose, and that General Ott was displeased with Lord Keith for declining to comply with a proposal so utterly unknown in the usages of war. It is difficult to give credit to this story.

With this view, ere Buonaparte broke up from Ivrea, Lannes, who had commanded his vanguard with so much gallantry, victorious at Romano, seemed about to improve his advantage. He had marched on Chiavaso, and seizing on a number of boats and small vessels, appeared desirous to construct a bridge over the Po at that place. This attracted the attention of Melas. It might be equally a preliminary to an attack on Turin, or a movement towards Genoa. But as the Austrian General was at the same time alarmed by the descent of General Tureau's division from Mount Cenis, and their capture of Susa and La Brunneta, Turin seemed ascertained to be the object of the French; and Melas acted on this idea. He sent a strong force to oppose the establishment of the bridge, and while his attention was thus occupied, Buonaparte was left to take the road to Milan unmolested. Vercelli was occupied by the cavalry under Murat, and the Sesia was crossed without obstacle. The Tesino, a broad and rapid river, offered more serious opposition; but the French found four or five small boats, in which they pushed across an advanced party under General Gerard. The Austrians, who opposed the passage, were in a great measure cavalry, who could not act on account of the woody and impracticable character of the bank of the river. The passage was accomplished; and, upon the second of June, Buonaparte entered Milan, where he was received with acclamations by a numerous class of citizens, who looked for the re-establishment of the Cisalpine Republic. The Austrians were totally unprepared for this movement. Pavia fell into the hands of the French; Lodi and Cremona were occupied, and Pizzighitone was invested.

Meantime, Buonaparte, fixing his residence in the ducal palace of Milan, employed himself in receiving the deputations of various public bodies, and in re-organizing the Cisalpine government, while he waited impatiently to be joined by Moncey and his division, from Mount St Gothard. They arrived at length, but marching more slowly than accorded with the fiery promptitude of the First Consul, who was impatient to relieve the blockade of Genoa, which place he concluded still held out. He now issued a proclamation to his troops, in which he described, as the result of the efforts he expected from them, "Cloudless glory and solid peace." On the 9th of June his armies were again in motion.

Melas, an excellent officer, had at the same time some of the slowness imputed to his countrymen, or of the irresolution incident to the advanced age of eighty years,—for so old was the opponent of Buonaparte, then in the very prime of human life,—or, as others suspect, it may have been orders from Vienna which detained the Austrian general so long at Turin, where he lay in a great measure inactive. It is true, that on receiving notice of Buonaparte's march on Milan, he instantly despatched orders to General Ott, as we have already stated, to raise the siege of Genoa, and join him with all possible speed; but it seemed, that, in the meantime, he might have disquieted Buonaparte's lines of communication, by acting upon the river Dora, attacking Ivrea, in which the French had left much baggage and artillery, and relieving the fort of Bard. Accordingly, he made an attempt of this kind, by detaching 6000 men to Chiavaso, who were successful in delivering some Austrian prisoners at that place; but Ivrea proved strong enough to resist them, and the French retaining possession of that place, the Austrians could not occupy the valley of the Dora, or relieve the besieged fortress of Bard.

The situation of Melas now became critical. His communications with the left, or north bank of the Po, were entirely cut off, and by a line stretching from Fort Bard to Placentia, the French occupied the best and fairest share of the north of Italy, while he found himself confined to Piedmont. The Austrian army, besides, was divided into two parts,—one under Ott, which was still near Genoa, that had so lately surrendered to them,—one with Melas himself, which was at Turin. Neither were agreeably situated. That of Genoa was observed on its

right by Suchet, whose army, reinforced with the garrison which, retaining their arms, evacuated that city under Massena, might soon be expected to renew the offensive. There was, therefore, the greatest risk, that Buonaparte, pushing a strong force across the Po, might attack and destroy either the division of Ott, or that of Melas himself, before they were able to form a junction. To prevent such a catastrophe, Ott received orders to march forward on the Tesino, while Melas, moving towards Alexandria, prepared to resume his communications with his lieutenant-general.

Buonaparte, on his part, was anxious to relieve Genoa; news of the fall of which had not reached him. With this view he resolved to force his passage over the Po, and move against the Austrians, who were found to occupy in strength the villages of Casteggio and Montebello. These troops proved to be the greater part of the very army which he expected to find before Genoa, and which was commanded by Ott, but which had moved westward, in conformity to the orders of Melas.

General Lannes, who led the vanguard of the French, as usual, was attacked early in the morning by a superior force, which he had much difficulty in resisting. The nature of the ground gave advantage to the Austrian cavalry, and the French were barely able to support their charges. At length the division of Victor came up to support Lannes, and the victory became no longer doubtful, though the Austrians fought most obstinately. The fields being covered with tall crops of grain, and especially of rye, the different bodies were frequently hid until they found themselves at the bayonet's point, without having had any previous opportunity to estimate each other's force, a circumstance which led to much close fighting, and necessarily to much slaughter. At length the Austrians retreated, leaving the field of battle covered with their dead, and above 5000 prisoners in the hands of their enemies.

General Ott rallied the remains of his army under the walls of Tortona. From the prisoners taken at the battle of Montebello, as this action was called, Buonaparte learned, for the first time, the surrender of Genoa, which apprised him that he was too late for the enterprise which he had meditated. He therefore halted his army for three days in the position of Stradella, unwilling to advance into the open plain of Marengo, and trusting that Melas would find himself compelled to give him battle in the position which he had chosen, as most unfavourable for the Austrian cavalry. He despatched messengers to Suchet, commanding him to cross the mountains by the Col de Cadibona, and march on the river Scrivia, which would place him in the rear of the Austrians.

Even during the very battle of the 11th, the Chief Consul was joined by Dessaix, who had just arrived from Egypt. Landed at Frejus, after an hundred interruptions, that seemed as if intended to withhold him from the fate he was about to meet, he had received letters from Buonaparte, inviting him to come to him without delay. The tone of the letters expressed discontent and embarrassment. "He has gained all," said Dessaix, who was much attached to Buonaparte, "and yet he is not happy." Immediately afterwards, on reading the account of his march over St Bernard, he added, "He will leave us nothing to do." He immediately set out post to place himself under the command of his ancient general, and, as it eventually proved, to encounter an early death. They had an interesting conversation on the subject of Egypt, to which Buonaparte continued to cling, as to a matter in which his own fame was intimately and inseparably concerned. Dessaix immediately received the command of the division hitherto under that of Boudet.

In the meanwhile, the head-quarters of Melas had been removed from Turin, and fixed at Alexandria for the space of two days; yet he did not, as Buonaparte had expected, attempt to move forward on the French position at Stradella, in order to force his way to Mantua; so that the First Consul was obliged to advance towards Alexandria, apprehensive lest the Austrians should escape

from him, and either, by a march to the left flank, move for the Tesino, cross that river, and, by seizing Milan, open a communication with Austria in that direction; or, by marching to the right, and falling back on Genoa, overwhelm Suchet, and take a position, the right of which might be covered by that city, while the sea was open for supplies and provisions, and their flank protected by the British squadron.

Either of these movements might have been attended with alarming consequences; and Napoleon, impatient lest his enemy should give him the slip, advanced his head-quarters on the 12th to Voghera, and on the 13th to St Julian, in the midst of the great plain of Marengo. As he still saw nothing of the enemy, the Chief Consul concluded that Melas had actually retreated from Alexandria, having, notwithstanding the temptation afforded by the level ground around him, preferred withdrawing, most probably to Genoa, to the hazard of a battle. He was still more confirmed in this belief, when, pushing forward as far as the village of Marengo, he found it only occupied by an Austrian rear-guard, which offered no persevering defence against the French, but retreated from the village without much opposition. The Chief Consul could no longer doubt that Melas had eluded him, by marching off by one of his flanks, and probably by his right. He gave orders to Dessaix, whom he had intrusted with the command of the reserve, to march towards Rivolta, with a view to observe the communications with Genoa; and in this manner the reserve was removed half a day's march from the rest of the army, which had like to have produced most sinister effects upon the event of the great battle that followed.

Contrary to what Buonaparte had anticipated, the Austrian general, finding the First Consul in his front, and knowing that Suchet was in his rear, had adopted, with the consent of a council of war, the resolution of trying the fate of arms in a general battle. It was a bold, but not a rash resolution. The Austrians were more numerous than the French in infantry and artillery; much superior in cavalry, both in point of numbers and of discipline; and it has been already said, that the extensive plain of Marengo was favourable for the use of that description of force. Melas, therefore, on the evening of the 13th, concentrated his forces in front of Alexandria, divided by the river Bormida from the purposed field of fight; and Napoleon, undeceived concerning the intentions of his enemy, made with all haste the necessary preparations to receive battle, and failed not to send orders to Dessaix to return as speedily as possible and join the army. That general was so far advanced on his way towards Rivolta before these counter orders reached him, that his utmost haste only brought him back after the battle had lasted several hours.

Buonaparte's disposition was as follows:—The village of Marengo was occupied by the divisions of Gardanne and Chambarlhac. Victor, with other two divisions, and commanding the whole, was prepared to support them. He extended his left as far as Castel Ceriolo, a small village which lies almost parallel with Marengo. Behind this first line was placed a brigade of cavalry, under Kellermann, ready to protect the flanks of the line, or to debouche through the intervals, if opportunity served, and attack the enemy. About a thousand yards in the rear of the first line was stationed the second, under Lannes, supported by Champeaux's brigade of cavalry. At the same distance, in the rear of Lannes, was placed a strong reserve, or third line, consisting of the division of Carra St Cyr, and the Consular Guard, at the head of whom was Buonaparte himself. Thus the French were drawn up on this memorable day in three distinct divisions, each composed of a *corps d'armée*, distant about three quarters of a mile in the rear of each other.

The force which the French had in the field in the commencement of the day, was above twenty thousand men; the reserve, under Dessaix, upon its arrival, might make the whole amount to thirty thousand. The Austrians attacked with nearly forty thousand troops. Both armies were in high spirits,

determined to fight, and each confident in their general—the Austrians in the bravery and experience of Melas, the French in the genius and talents of Buonaparte. The immediate stake was the possession of Italy, but it was impossible to guess how many yet more important consequences the event of the day might involve. Thus much seemed certain, that the battle must be decisive, and that defeat must prove destruction to the party who should sustain it. Buonaparte, if routed, could hardly have accomplished his retreat upon Milan; and Melas, if defeated, had Suchet in his rear. The fine plain on which the French were drawn up, seemed lists formed by nature for such an encounter, when the fate of kingdoms was at issue.

Early in the morning the Austrians crossed the Bormida, in three columns, by three military bridges, and advanced in the same order. The right and the centre columns, consisting of infantry, were commanded by Generals Haddick and Kaine; the left, composed entirely of light troops and cavalry, made a detour round Castel Ceriolo, the village mentioned as forming the extreme right of the French position. About seven in the morning, Haddick attacked Marengo with fury, and Gardanne's division, after fighting bravely, proved inadequate to its defence. Victor supported Gardanne, and endeavoured to cover the village by an oblique movement. Melas, who commanded in person the central column of the Austrians, moved to support Haddick; and by their united efforts, the village of Marengo, after having been once or twice lost and won, was finally carried.

The broken divisions of Victor and Gardanne, driven out of Marengo, endeavoured to rally on the second line, commanded by Lannes. This was about nine o'clock. While one Austrian column manœuvred to turn Lannes's flank, in which they could not succeed, another, with better fortune, broke through the centre of Victor's division, in a considerable degree disordered them, and thus uncovering Lannes's left wing, compelled him to retreat. He was able to do so in tolerably good order; but not so the broken troops of Victor on the left, who fled to the rear in great confusion. The column of Austrian cavalry who had come round Castel Ceriolo, now appeared on the field, and threatened the right of Lannes, which alone remained standing firm. Napoleon detached two battalions of the Consular Guard from the third line, or reserve, which, forming squares behind the right wing of Lannes, supported its resistance, and withdrew from it in part the attention of the enemy's cavalry. The Chief Consul himself, whose post was distinguished by the furred caps of a guard of two hundred grenadiers, brought up Monnier's division, which had but now entered the field at the moment of extreme need, being the advance of Dessaix's reserve, returned from their half day's march towards Rivolta. These were, with the guards, directed to support Lannes's right wing, and a brigade detached from them was thrown into Castel Ceriolo, which now became the point of support on Buonaparte's extreme right, and which the Austrians, somewhat unaccountably, had omitted to occupy in force when their left column passed it in the beginning of the engagement. Buonaparte, meantime, by several desperate charges of cavalry, endeavoured in vain to arrest the progress of the enemy. His left wing was put completely to flight; his centre was in great disorder, and it was only his right wing, which, by strong support, had been enabled to stand their ground.

In these circumstances the day seemed so entirely against him, that, to prevent his right wing from being overwhelmed, he was compelled to retreat in the face of an enemy superior in numbers, and particularly in cavalry and artillery. It was, however, rather a change of position, than an absolute retreat to the rear. The French right, still resting on Castel Ceriolo, which formed the pivot of the manœuvre, had orders to retreat very slowly, the centre faster, the left at ordinary quick time. In this manner the whole line of battle was changed, and instead of extending diagonally across the plain, as when the fight

began, the French now occupied an oblong position, the left being withdrawn as far back as St Julian, where it was protected by the advance of Dessaix's troops. This division, being the sole remaining reserve, had now at length arrived on the field, and, by Buonaparte's directions, had taken a strong position in front of Saint Julian, on which the French were obliged to retreat, great part of the left wing in the disorder of utter flight, the right wing steadily, and by intervals fronting the enemy, and sustaining with firmness the attacks made upon them.

At this time, and when victory seemed within his grasp, the strength of General Melas, eighty years old, and who had been many hours on horseback, failed entirely; and he was obliged to leave the field, and retire to Alexandria, committing to General Zach the charge of completing a victory which appeared to be already gained.

But the position of Dessaix, at Saint Julian, afforded the First Consul a rallying point, which he now greatly needed. His army of reserve lay formed in two lines in front of the village, their flanks sustained by battalions *en potence*, formed into close columns of infantry; on the left was a train of artillery; on the right, Kellermann, with a large body of French cavalry, which, routed in the beginning of the day, had rallied in this place. The ground that Dessaix occupied was where the high road forms a sort of defile, having on the one hand a wood, on the other a thick plantation of vines.

The French soldier understands better perhaps than any other in the world the art of rallying, after having been dispersed. The fugitives of Victor's division, though in extreme disorder, threw themselves into the rear of Dessaix's position, and, covered by his troops, renewed their ranks and their courage. Yet, when Dessaix saw the plain filled with flying soldiers, and beheld Buonaparte himself in full retreat, he thought all must be lost. They met in the midst of the greatest apparent confusion, and Dessaix said, "The battle is lost—I suppose I can do no more for you than secure your retreat?"

"By no means," answered the First Consul, "the battle is, I trust, gained—the disordered troops whom you see are my centre and left, whom I will rally in your rear—Push forward your column."

Dessaix, at the head of the ninth light brigade, instantly rushed forward, and charged the Austrians, wearied with fighting the whole day, and disordered by their hasty pursuit. The moment at which he advanced, so critically favourable for Buonaparte, was fatal to himself. He fell, shot through the head.* But his soldiers continued to attack with fury, and Kellermann, at the same time charging the Austrian column, penetrated its ranks, and separated from the rest six battalions, which, surprised and panic-struck, threw down their arms; Zach, who, in the absence of Melas, commanded in chief, being at their head, was taken with them. The Austrians were now driven back in their turn. Buonaparte galloped along the French line, calling on the soldiers to advance. "You know," he said, "it is always my practice to sleep on the field of battle."

The Austrians had pursued their success with incautious hurry, and without attending to the due support which one corps ought, in all circumstances, to be prepared to afford to another. Their left flank was also exposed, by their hasty advance, to Buonaparte's right, which had never lost order. They were, therefore, totally unprepared to resist this general, furious, and unexpected attack. They were forced back at all points, and pursued along the plain, suffering immense loss; nor were they again able to make a stand until driven

* The Moniteur put in the mouth of the dying general a message to Buonaparte, in which he expressed his regret that he had done so little for history, and in that of the Chief Consul an answer, lamenting that he had no time to weep for Dessaix. But Buonaparte himself assures us, that Dessaix was shot dead on the spot; nor is it probable that the tide of battle, then just upon the act of turning, left the Consul himself time for set phrases, or sentimental ejaculations.

back over the Bormida. Their fine cavalry, instead of being drawn up in squadrons to cover their retreat, fled in disorder, and at full gallop, riding down all that was in their way. The confusion at passing the river was inextricable—large bodies of men were abandoned on the left side, and surrendered to the French in the course of the night, or next morning.

It is evident, in perusing the accounts of this battle, that the victory was wrested out of the hands of the Austrians, after they had become, by the fatigues of the day, too weary to hold it. Had they sustained their advance by reserves, their disaster would not have taken place. It seems also certain, that the fate of Buonaparte was determined by the arrival of Dessaix at the moment he did, and that in spite of the skilful disposition by which the Chief Consul was enabled to support the attack so long, he must have been utterly defeated had Dessaix put less despatch in his counter-march. Military men have been farther of opinion, that Melas was guilty of a great error, in not occupying Castel Ceriolo on the advance; and that the appearances of early victory led the Austrians to be by far too unguarded in their advance on Saint Julian.

In consequence of a loss which seemed in the circumstances altogether irreparable, Melas resolved to save the remains of his army, by entering, upon the 15th June 1800, into a convention, or rather capitulation, by which he agreed, on receiving permission to retire behind Mantua, to yield up Genoa, and all the fortified places which the Austrians possessed in Piedmont, Lombardy, and the Legations. Buonaparte the more readily granted these terms, that an English army was in the act of arriving on the coast. His wisdom taught him not to drive a powerful enemy to despair, and to be satisfied with the glory of having regained, in the affairs of Montebello and of Marengo, almost all the loss sustained by the French in the disastrous campaign of 1799. Enough had been done to show, that, as the fortunes of France appeared to wane and dwindle after Buonaparte's departure, so they revived with even more than their original brilliancy, as soon as this Child of Destiny had returned to preside over them. An armistice was also agreed upon, which it was supposed might afford time for the conclusion of a victorious peace with Austria; and Buonaparte extended this truce to the armies on the Rhine, as well as those in Italy.

Two days having been spent in the arrangements which the convention with Melas rendered necessary, Buonaparte, on the 17th June, returned to Milan, where he again renewed the republican constitution, which had been his original gift to the Cisalpine State. He executed several other acts of authority. Though displeased with Massena for the surrender of Genoa, he did not the less constitute him Commander-in-chief in Italy; and though doubtful of the attachment of Jourdan, who, on the 18th Brumaire, seemed ready to espouse the Republican interest, he did not on that account hesitate to name him Minister of the French Republic in Piedmont, which was equivalent to giving him the administration of that province. These conciliatory steps had the effect of making men of the most opposite parties see their own interest in supporting the government of the First Consul.

The presence of Napoleon was now eagerly desired at Paris. He set out from Milan on the 24th June, and in his passage through Lyons, paused to lay the foundation-stone for rebuilding the Place Bellecour; a splendid square, which had been destroyed by the frantic vengeance of the Jacobins when Lyons was retaken by them from the insurgent party of Girondins and Royalists. Finally, the Chief Consul returned to Paris upon the 2d July. He had left it on the 9th of May; yet in the space of not quite two months, how many hopes had he realized! All that the most sanguine partizans had ventured to anticipate of his success had been exceeded. It seemed that his mere presence in Italy was of itself sufficient at once to obliterate the misfortunes of a disastrous campaign, and restore the fruits of his own brilliant victories, which had been lost during his absence. It appeared as if he was the sun of France—when

he was hid from her, all was gloom—when he appeared, light and serenity were restored. All the inhabitants, leaving their occupations, thronged to the Tuileries to obtain a glimpse of the wonderful man, who appeared with the laurel of victory in the one hand, and the olive of peace in the other. Shouts of welcome and congratulation resounded from the gardens, the courts, and the quays, by which the palace is surrounded; high and low illuminated their houses; and there were few Frenchmen, perhaps, that were not for the moment partakers of the general joy.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Napoleon offers, and the Austrian Envoy accepts, a new Treaty—The Emperor refuses it, unless England is included.—Negotiations then attempted with England—They fail, and Austria is encouraged to a renewal of the War.—Reasoning on the Policy of this Conclusion.—An Armistice of forty-five Days is followed by the resumption of Hostilities.—Battle of Hohenlinden gained by Moreau on the 3d December 1800.—Other Battles take place, by which the Austrian Affairs are made desperate, and they agree to a separate Peace.—An Armistice takes place, which is followed by the Treaty of Lunéville.—Convention between France and the United States.—Explanatory Recapitulation.—The Queen of Naples repairs to Petersburg to intercede with the Emperor Paul—His capricious Character: originally a violent Anti-Gallican, he grows cold and hostile to the Austrians, and attached to the Fame and Character of the Chief Consul—Receives the Queen of Naples with cordiality, and applies in her behalf to Buonaparte—His Envoy received at Paris with the utmost distinction, and the Royal Family of Naples saved for the present, though on severe Conditions.—The Neapolitan General compelled to evacuate the Roman Territories.—Rome restored to the Authority of the Pope.—Napoleon demands of the King of Spain to declare War against Portugal.—Olivenza and Almeida taken.—Buonaparte's conduct towards the Peninsular Powers overbearing and peremptory.—The British alone active in opposing the French.—Malta, after a Blockade of two Years, obliged to submit to the English.

NAPOLEON proceeded to manage with great skill and policy the popularity which his success had gained for him. In war it was always his custom, after he had struck some venturous and apparently decisive blow, to offer such conditions as might induce the enemy to submit, and separate his interest from that of his allies. Upon this system of policy he offered the Count de St Julien, an Austrian envoy, the conditions of a treaty, having for its basis that of Campo Formio, which, after the loss of Italy on the fatal field of Marengo, afforded terms much more favourable than the Emperor of Germany was entitled to have expected from the victors. The Austrian envoy accordingly took upon him to subscribe these preliminaries; but they did not meet the approbation of the Emperor, who placed his honour on observing accurately the engagements which he had formed with England, and who refused to accede to a treaty in which she was not included. It was added, however, that Lord Minto, the British ambassador at Vienna, had intimated Britain's willingness to be included in a treaty for general pacification.

This proposal occasioned a communication between France and Britain, through Monsieur Otto, commissioner for the care of French prisoners. The French envoy intimated, that as a preliminary to Britain's entering on the treaty, she must consent to an armistice by sea, and suspend the advantages which she received from her naval superiority, in the same manner as the First Consul of

France had dispensed with prosecuting his victories by land. This demand would have withdrawn the blockade of the British vessels from the French sea-ports, and allowed the sailing of reinforcements to Egypt and Malta, which last important place was on the point of surrendering to the English. The British ministers were also sensible that there was, besides, a great difference between a truce betwixt two land armies, stationed in presence of each other, and a suspension of naval hostilities over the whole world; since in the one case, on breaking off the treaty, hostilities can be almost instantly resumed; on the other, the distance and uncertainty of communication may prevent the war being recommenced for many months; by which chance of delay, the French, as being inferior at sea, were sure to be the gainers. The British statesmen, therefore, proposed some modifications, to prevent the obvious inequality of such armistice. But it was replied on the part of France, that though they would accept of such a modified armistice, if Great Britain would enter into a separate treaty, yet the Chief Consul would not consent to it if Austria was to be participant of the negotiation.

Here, therefore, the overtures of peace betwixt France and England were shipwrecked, and the Austrian Emperor was reduced to the alternative of renewing the war, or entering into a treaty without his allies. He appears to have deemed himself obliged to prefer the more dangerous and more honourable course.

This was a generous resolution on the part of Austria; but by no means politic at the period, when their armies were defeated, their national spirit depressed, and when the French armies had penetrated so far into Germany. Even Pitt himself, upon whose declining health the misfortune made a most unfavourable impression, had considered the defeat of Marengo as a conclusion to the hopes of success against France for a considerable period. "Fold up the map," he said, pointing to that of Europe; "it need not be again opened for these twenty years."

Yet, unwilling to resign the contest, even while a spark of hope remained, it was resolved upon in the British councils to encourage Austria to farther prosecution of the war. Perhaps, in recommending such a measure to her ally, at a period when she had sustained such great losses, and was in the state of dejection to which they gave rise, Great Britain too much resembled an eager and over-zealous second, who urges his principal to continue a combat after his strength is exhausted. Austria, a great and powerful nation, if left to repose, would have in time recruited her strength, and constituted once again a balance against the power of France on the continent; but if urged to farther exertions in the hour of her extremity, she was likely to sustain such farther losses, as might render her comparatively insignificant for a number of years. Such at least is the conclusion which we, who have the advantage of considering the measure with reference to its consequences, are now enabled to form. At the emergency, things were viewed in a different light. The victories of Suwarrow and of the Archduke Charles were remembered, as well as the recent defeats sustained by France in the year 1799, which had greatly tarnished the fame of her arms. The character of Buonaparte was not yet sufficiently estimated. His failure before Acre had made an impression in England, which was not erased by the victory of Marengo; the extreme prudence which usually tempered his most venturous undertakings was not yet generally known; and the belief and hope were received, that one who ventured on such new and daring manœuvres as Napoleon employed, was likely to behold them miscarry at length, and thus to fall as rapidly as he had risen.

Influenced by such motives, it was determined in the British cabinet to encourage the Emperor, by a loan of two millions, to place himself and his brother, the Archduke John, in command of the principal army, raise the whole national force of his mighty empire, and at the head of the numerous forces which he

could summon into the field, either command a more equal peace, or try the fortunes of the most desperate war.

The money was paid, and the Emperor joined the army; but the negotiations for peace were not broken off. On the contrary, they were carried on much on the terms which Saint Julien had subscribed to, with this additional and discreditable circumstance, that the First Consul, as a pledge of the Austrian sincerity, required that the three fortified towns of Ingoldstadt, Ulm, and Philipstadt, should be placed temporarily in the hands of the French; a condition to which the Austrians were compelled to submit. But the only advantage purchased by this surrender, which greatly exposed the hereditary dominions of Austria, was an armistice of forty-five days, at the end of which hostilities were again renewed.

In the action of Haag, the Archduke John, whose credit in the army almost rivalled that of his brother Charles, obtained considerable advantages; and, encouraged by them, he ventured on the 3d of December 1800, two days afterwards, a great and decisive encounter with Moreau. This was the occasion on which that general gained over the Austrians the bloody and most important victory of Hohenlinden, an achievement which did much to keep his reputation for military talents abreast with that of the First Consul himself. Moreau pursued his victory, and obtained possession of Salzburg. At the same time Augereau, at the head of the Gallo-Batavian army, pressed forward into Bohemia; and Macdonald, passing from the country of the Grisons into the Valteline, forced a division of his army across the Mincio, and communicated with Massena and the French army in Italy. The Austrian affairs seemed utterly desperate. The Archduke Charles was again placed at the head of her forces, but they were so totally discouraged, that a retreat on all points was the only measure which could be executed.

Another and a final cessation of arms was now the only resource of the Austrians; and, in order to obtain it, the Emperor was compelled to agree to make a peace separate from his allies. Britain, in consideration of the extremity to which her ally was reduced, voluntarily relieved him from the engagement by which he was restrained from doing so without her participation. An armistice shortly afterwards took place, and the Austrians being now sufficiently humbled, it was speedily followed by a peace. Joseph Buonaparte, for this purpose, met with the Austrian minister, Count Cobentzel, at Luneville, where the negotiations were carried on.

There were two conditions of the treaty, which were peculiarly galling to the Emperor. Buonaparte peremptorily exacted the cession of Tuscany, the hereditary dominions of the brother of Francis, which were to be given up to a prince of the House of Parma, while the Archduke was to obtain an indemnity in Germany. The French Consul demanded, with no less pertinacity, that Francis (though not empowered to do so by the Germanic constitution) should confirm the peace, as well in his capacity of Emperor of Germany, as in that of sovereign of his own hereditary dominions. This demand, from which Buonaparte would on no account depart, involved a point of great difficulty and delicacy. One of the principal clauses of the treaty included the cession of the whole territories on the left bank of the Rhine to the French Republic; thereby depriving not only Austria, but Prussia, and various other princes of the German empire, of their possessions in the districts, which were now made over to France. It was provided that the Princes who should suffer such deprivations, were to be remunerated by indemnities, as they were termed, to be allotted to them at the expense of the Germanic body in general. Now, the Emperor had no power to authorize the alienation of these fiefs of the empire, without consent of the Diet, and this was strongly urged by his envoy.

Buonaparte was, however, determined to make peace on no other terms than those of the Emperor's giving away what was not his to bestow. Francis was

compelled to submit, and, as the necessity of the case pleaded its apology, the act of the Emperor was afterwards ratified by the Diet. Except in these mortifying claims, the submission to which plainly intimated the want of power to resist compulsion, the treaty of Luneville was not much more advantageous to France than that of Campo Formio; and the moderation of the First Consul indicated at once his desire of peace upon the continent, and considerable respect for the bravery and strength of Austria, though enfeebled by such losses as those of Marengo and Hohenlinden.

We have already noticed the disputes betwixt France and America, and the scandalous turn of the negotiations, by which the French Directory attempted to bully or wheedle the United States out of a sum of money, which, in part at least, was to be dedicated to their own private use. Since that time the aggressions committed by the French on the American navy had been so numerous, that the two republics seemed about to go to war, and the United States actually issued letters of marque for making reprisals on the French. New communications and negotiations, however, were opened, which Buonaparte studied to bring to maturity. His brother Joseph acted as negotiator, and on the 30th of September 1800, a convention was entered into, to subsist for the space of eight years, agreeing on certain modifications of the right of search, declaring that commerce should be free between the countries, and that the captures on either side, excepting such as were contraband, and destined for an enemy's harbour, should be mutually restored. Thus Buonaparte restored peace between France and the United States, and prevented the latter, in all probability, from throwing themselves into a closer union with Britain, to which their common descent, with the similarity of manners, language, and laws, overcoming the recollection of recent hostilities, might have otherwise strongly inclined them.

Still more important results were derived by Napoleon, from the address and political sagacity, with which, in accommodating matters with the court of Naples, he contrived to form what finally became a strong and predominating interest in the councils, and even the affections of a monarch, whose amity was, of all others, the most important to his plans. The prince alluded to was the Emperor of Russia, who had been, during the preceding year, the most formidable and successful enemy encountered by France since her revolution. A short resumption of facts is necessary, to understand the circumstances in which the negotiation with Naples originated.

When Buonaparte departed for Egypt, all Italy, excepting Tuscany, and the dominions assigned to Austria by the treaty of Campo Formio, was in the hands of the French; while Naples was governed by the ephemeral Parthenopean Republic, and the city of the Popes by that which assumed the superb title of Roman. These authorities, however, were only nominal; the French generals exercised the real authority in both countries. Suddenly, and as if by magic, this whole state of affairs was changed by the military talents of Suwarrow. The Austrians and Russians gained great successes in the north of Italy, and General Macdonald found himself obliged to evacuate Naples, and to concentrate the principal resistance of the French in Lombardy and Piedmont. Cardinal Ruffo, a soldier, churchman, and politician, put himself at the head of a numerous body of insurgents, and commenced war against such French troops as had been left in the south, and in the middle of Italy. This movement was actively supported by the British fleet. Lord Nelson recovered Naples; Rome surrendered to Commodore Trowbridge. Thus, the Parthenopean and Roman republics were extinguished for ever. The royal family returned to Naples, and that fine city and country were once more a kingdom. Rome, the capital of the world, was occupied by Neapolitan troops, generally supposed the most indifferent of modern times.

Replaced in his richest territories by the allies, the King of Naples was bound

by every tie to assist them in the campaign of 1800. He accordingly sent an army into the March of Ancona, under the command of Count Roger de Damas, who, with the assistance of insurrectionary forces* among the inhabitants, and a body of Austrians, was to clear Tuscany of the French. Undeterred by the battle of Marengo, the Count de Damas marched against the French general Miollis, who commanded in Tuscany, and sustained a defeat by him near Sienna. Retreat became now necessary, the more especially as the armistice which was entered into by General Melas deprived the Neapolitans of any assistance from the Austrians, and rendered their whole expedition utterly hopeless. They were not even included by name in the armistice, and were thus left exposed to the whole vengeance of the French. Damas retreated into the territories of the Church, which were still occupied by the Neapolitan forces. The consequence of these events was easily foreseen. The Neapolitan troops, so soon as the French could find leisure to look towards them, must be either destroyed entirely, or driven back upon Naples, and that city must be again forsaken by the royal family, happy if they were once more able to make their escape to Sicily, as on the former occasion.

At this desperate crisis, the Queen of the two Sicilies took a resolution which seemed almost as desperate, and could only have been adopted by a woman of a bold and decisive character. She resolved, notwithstanding the severity of the season, to repair in person to the court of the Emperor Paul, and implore his intercession with the First Consul, in behalf of her husband and his territories.

We have not hitherto mentioned, except cursorily, the powerful prince whose mediation she implored. The son and successor of the celebrated Catherine, far from possessing the prudence and political sagacity of his mother, seemed rather to display the heady passions and imperfect judgment of his unfortunate father. He was capricious in the choice of his objects, pursuing for the time, with uncommon and irregular zeal and pertinacity, projects which he afterwards discarded and abandoned, swelling trifles of dress or behaviour into matters of importance, and neglecting, on the other hand, what was of real consequence;—governed, in short, rather by imagination than by his reasoning qualities, and sometimes affording room to believe that he actually laboured under a partial aberration of mind. Such characters are often to be met with in private society, the restraints of which keep them within such limits, that they pass through life without attracting much notice, unless when creating a little mirth, or giving rise to some passing wonder. But an absolute prince, possessed of such a disposition, is like a giddy person placed on the verge of a precipice, which would try the soundest head, and must overpower a weak one.

The Emperor had first distinguished himself by an energetic defence of the rights of sovereigns, and a hatred of whatever belonged to or was connected with the French Revolution, from a political maxim to the shape of a coat or a hat. The brother of Louis XVI., and inheritor of his rights, found a refuge in the Russian dominions; and Paul, fond, as most princes are, of military glory, promised himself that of restoring the Bourbon dynasty by force of arms.

The train of victories acquired by Suwarrow was well calculated to foster these original partialities of the Emperor; and, accordingly, while success continued to wait on his banners, he loaded his general with marks of his regard, elevated him to the rank of a prince, and conferred on him the title of Italinsky, or Italicus.

The very first and only misfortune which befell Suwarrow, seems to have ruined him in the opinion of his capricious master. The defeat of Korsakow by Massena, near Zurich, had involved Suwarrow in great momentary danger,

* These were, at this period, easily raised in any part of Italy. The exactions of the French had entirely alienated the affections of the natives, who had long since seen through their pretence of affording them the benefit of a free government.

as he advanced into Switzerland, reckoning on the support of that general, whose disaster left his right uncovered. Now, although Suwarrow saved his army on this occasion by a retreat, which required talent equal to that which achieved his numerous victories, yet the bare fact of his having received a check, was sufficient to ruin him with his haughty sovereign. Paul was yet more offended with the conduct of the Austrians. The Archduke Charles having left Switzerland to descend into Germany, had given occasion and opportunity for Massena to cross the Limmat and surprise Korsakow; and this, notwithstanding every explanation and apology, rankled in the mind of the Czar. He recalled his armies from the frontiers of Germany, and treated his veteran and victorious general with such marks of neglect and displeasure, that the old man's heart sunk under them.

In the meanwhile, Paul gathered up farther subjects of complaint against the Austrian government, and complained of their having neglected to provide for some Russian prisoners, under a capitulation which they made in behalf of their own, at the surrender of Ancona to the French.

The Austrians could not afford to lose so powerful and efficient an ally in the day of their adversity. They endeavoured to explain, that the movement of the Archduke Charles was inevitably necessary, in consequence of an invasion of the Austrian territory—they laid the blame of the omission of the Russians in the capitulation upon the commandant Frœlich, and offered to place him under arrest. The Emperor of Austria even proposed, in despite of the natural pride which is proper to his distinguished House, to place Suwarrow at the head of the Austrian armies,—a proffer which, if it had been accepted, might have given rise to an extraordinary struggle betwixt the experience, determination, and warlike skill of the veteran Scythian, and the formidable talents of Buonaparte, and which perhaps offered the only chance which Europe possessed at the time, of opposing to the latter a rival worthy of himself; for Suwarrow had never yet been conquered, and possessed an irresistible influence over the minds of his soldiers. These great generals, however, were not destined ever to decide the fate of the world by their meeting.

Suwarrow, a Russian in all his feelings, broke his heart, and died under the unmerited displeasure of his Emperor, whom he had served with so much fidelity. If the memory of his unfortunate sovereign were to be judged of according to ordinary rules, his conduct towards his distinguished subject would have left on it an indelible stigma. As it is, the event must pass as another proof, that the Emperor Paul was not amenable, from the construction of his understanding and temperament, to the ordinary rules of censure.

Meanwhile, the proposals of Austria were in vain. The Czar was not to be brought back to his former sentiments. He was like a spoiled child, who, tired of his favourite toy, seems bent to break asunder and destroy what was lately the dearest object of his affection.

When such a character as Paul changes his opinion of his friends, he generally runs into the opposite extreme, and alters also his thoughts of his enemies. Like his father, and others whose imagination is indifferently regulated, the Czar had need of some one of whom to make his idol. The extravagant admiration which the Emperor Peter felt for Frederick of Prussia, could not well be entertained for any one now alive, unless it were the First Consul of France; and on him, therefore, Paul was now disposed to turn his eyes with a mixture of wonder, and of a wish to imitate what he wondered at. This extravagance of admiration is a passion natural to some minds, (never strong ones,) and may be compared to that tendency which others have to be in love all their lives, in defiance of advancing age and other obstacles.

When Paul was beginning to entertain this humour, the arrival of the Queen of Sicily at his court gave him a graceful and even dignified opportunity to approach towards a connexion with Napoleon Buonaparte. His pride, too, must

have been gratified by seeing the daughter of the renowned Maria Theresa, the sister of the Emperor of Austria, at his court of St Petersburg, soliciting from the Czar of Russia the protection which her brother was totally unable to afford her; and a successful interference in her behalf would be a kind of insult to the misfortunes of that brother, against whom, as we have noticed, Paul nourished resentful feelings. He therefore resolved to open a communication with France, in behalf of the royal family of Naples. Lewinshoff, Grand Huntsman of Russia, was despatched to make the overtures of mediation. He was received with the utmost distinction at Paris, and Buonaparte made an instant and graceful concession to the request of the Emperor Paul. The First Consul agreed to suspend his military operations against Naples, and to leave the royal family in possession of their sovereignty; reserving to himself, however, the right of dictating the terms under which he was to grant them such an amnesty.

It was time that some effectual interposition should take place in defence of the King of Naples, who, though he had around him a nation individually brave and enthusiastic, was so ill-served, that his regular army was in the worst and most imperfect state of discipline. Murat, to whom Buonaparte had committed the task of executing his vengeance on Naples, had already crossed the Alps, and placed himself at the head of an army of ten thousand chosen men; a force then judged sufficient not only to drive the Neapolitan general Damas out of the Ecclesiastical States, but to pursue him as far as Naples, and occupy that beautiful capital of a prince, whose regular army consisted of more than thirty thousand soldiers, and whose irregular forces might have been increased to any number by the mountaineers of Calabria, who form excellent light troops, and by the numerous Lazzaroni of Naples, who had displayed their valour against Championnet, upon the first invasion of the French. But the zeal of a nation avails little when the spirit of the government bears no proportion to it. The government of Naples dreaded the approach of Murat as that of the Angel of Death; and they received the news that Lewinshoff had joined the French general at Florence, as a condemned criminal might have heard the news of a reprieve. The Russian envoy was received with distinguished honours at Florence. Murat appeared at the theatre with Lewinshoff, where the Italians, who had so lately seen the Russian and French banners placed in bloody opposition to each other, now beheld them formally united in presence of these dignitaries; in sign, it was said, that the two nations were combined for the peace of the world and general benefit of humanity. Untimely augury! How often after that period did these standards meet in the bloodiest fields history ever recorded; and what a long and desperate struggle was yet in reserve ere the general peace so boldly predicted was at length restored!

The respect paid by the First Consul to the wishes of Paul, saved for the present the royal family of Naples; but Murat, nevertheless, made them experience a full portion of the bitter cup which the vanquished are generally doomed to swallow. General Damas was commanded in the haughtiest terms to evacuate the Roman States, and not to presume to claim any benefit from the armistice which had been extended to the Austrians. At the same time, while the Neapolitans were thus compelled hastily to evacuate the Roman territories, general surprise was exhibited, when, instead of marching to Rome, and re-establishing the authority of the Roman Republic, Murat, according to the orders which he had received from the First Consul, carefully respected the territory of the Church, and reinstalled the officers of the Pope in what had been long termed the patrimony of St Peter's. This unexpected turn of circumstances originated in high policy on the part of Buonaparte.

We certainly do Napoleon no injustice in supposing, that personally he had little or no influential sense of religion. Some obscure yet rooted doctrines

of fatality, seem, so far as we can judge, to have formed the extent of his metaphysical creed. We can scarce term him even a deist; and he was an absolute stranger to every modification of Christian belief and worship. But he saw and valued the use of a national religion as an engine of state policy. In Egypt, he was desirous of being thought an envoy of Heaven; and though uncircumcised, drinking wine, and eating pork, still claimed to be accounted a follower of the law of the Prophet. He had pathetically expostulated with the Turks on their hostility towards him. The French, he said, had ceased to be followers of Jesus; and now that they were almost, if not altogether, Moslemah, would the true believers make war on those who had overthrown the cross, dethroned the Pope, and extirpated the order of Malta, the sworn persecutors of the Moslem faith? On his return to France, all this was to be forgotten, or only remembered as a trick played upon the infidels. He was, as we have said, aware of the necessity of a national faith to support the civil government; and as, while in Egypt, he affected to have destroyed the Catholic religion in honour of that of Mahommed, so, returned to Europe, he was now desirous to become the restorer of the temporal territories of the Pope, in order to obtain such a settlement of church affairs in France, as might procure for his own government the countenance of the Sovereign Pontiff, and for himself an admission into the pale of Christian princes. This restitution was in some measure consistent with his policy in 1798, when he had spared the temporalities of the Holy See. Totally indifferent as Napoleon was to religion in his personal capacity, his whole conduct shows his sense of its importance to the existence of a settled and peaceful state of society.

Besides evacuating the Ecclesiastical States, the Neapolitans were compelled by Murat to restore various paintings, statues, and other objects of art, which they had, in imitation of Buonaparte, taken forcibly from the Romans,—so captivating is the influence of bad example. A French army of about eighteen thousand men was to be quartered in Calabria, less for the purpose of enforcing the conditions of peace, than to save France the expense of supporting the troops, and to have them stationed where they might be embarked for Egypt at the shortest notice. The harbours of the Neapolitan dominions were of course to be closed against the English. A cession of part of the isle of Elba, and the relinquishment of all pretensions upon Tuscany, summed up the sacrifices of the King of Naples, who, considering how often he had braved Napoleon, had great reason to thank the Emperor of Russia for his effectual mediation in his favour.

These various measures respecting foreign relations, the treaty of Luneville, the acquisition of the good-will of the Emperor Paul, the restoration of Rome to the Pope's authority, and the mildness of the penalty inflicted on the King of Naples, seemed all to spring from a sound and moderate system, the object of which was rather the consolidation of Napoleon's government, than any wish to extend its influence or its conquests. His plans, in after times, often exhibited a mixture of the greatest good sense and prudence, with rash and splenetic explosions of an over-eager ambition, or a temper irritated by opposition; but it is to be remembered that Buonaparte was not yet so firm in the authority which he had but just acquired, as to encourage any display of the infirmities of his mind and temper.

His behaviour towards Portugal was, however, of a character deviating from the moderation he had in general displayed. Portugal, the ancient and faithful ally of England, was on that account the especial object of the First Consul's displeasure. He, therefore, demanded of the King of Spain, who, since the peace between the countries, had been the submissive vassal of France, to declare war on the Prince Regent of Portugal, although the husband of his daughter. War accordingly was declared, in obedience to the mandate of the First Consul, and the Spanish armies, together with an auxiliary army of French

under Leclerc, entered Portugal, took Olivenza and Almeida, and compelled the Prince Regent, 6th of June, 1801, to sign a treaty, engaging to shut his ports against the English, and surrendering to Spain, Olivenza, and other places on the frontier of the Guadiana. Buonaparte was highly discontented with this treaty, to which he would not accede; and he refused, at the same time, to withdraw from Spain the army of Leclerc. On the 29th September, he condescended to grant Portugal peace under some additional terms, which were not in themselves of much consequence, although the overbearing and peremptory conduct which he exhibited towards the peninsular powers, was a sign of the dictatorial spirit which he was prepared to assume in the affairs of Europe.

The same disposition was manifested in the mode by which Buonaparte was pleased to show his sense of the King of Spain's complaisance. He chose for that purpose to create a kingdom and a king—a king, too, of the house of Bourbon. An Infant of Spain obtained the throne of Tuscany, under the name of Etruria, rent from the house of Austria. Madame de Stael terms this the commencement of the great masquerade of Europe; but it was more properly the second act. The stage, during the first, was occupied by a quadrille of republics who were now to be replaced by an anti-mask of kings. This display of power pleased the national vanity, and an uproar of applause ensued, while the audience at the theatre applied to Buonaparte the well-known line—

“J’ai fait des rois, madame, et n’ai pas voulu l’être.”

While all the continent appeared thus willing to submit to one so ready to avail himself of their subjection, Britain alone remained at war; without allies, without, it might seem, a direct object; yet on the grand and unalterable principle, that no partial distress should induce her to submit to the system of degradation, which seemed preparing for all nations under the yoke of France, and which had placed France herself, with all her affected zeal for liberty, under the government of an arbitrary ruler. On every point the English squadrons annihilated the commerce of France, crippled her revenues, blockaded her ports, and prevented those combinations which would have crowned the total conquest of Europe, could the Master, as he might now be called, of the Land, have enjoyed, at the same time, the facilities which can only be afforded by communication by sea.

It was in vain that Buonaparte, who, besides his natural hardness of perseverance, connected a part of his own glory with the preservation of Egypt, endeavoured by various means to send supplies to that distant province. His convoys were driven back into harbour by the English fleets; and he directed against his admirals, who could not achieve impossibilities, the unavailing resentment natural to one who was so little accustomed to disappointment.

The chance of relieving Egypt was rendered yet more precarious by the loss of Malta, which, after a distressing blockade of two years, was obliged to submit to the English arms on the 15th of September 1800. The English were thus in possession of a strong, and almost impregnable citadel, in the midst of the Mediterranean, with an excellent harbour, and everything required for a naval station of the first importance; above all, they had obtained the very spot which Buonaparte had fixed upon for maintaining the communication with Egypt, which was now in greater danger than ever.

The capture of Malta was, however, by its consequences, favourable to Napoleon's views in one important respect. The Emperor Paul imagined he had rights upon that island, in consequence of his having declared himself Grand Master of the Order of Saint John; and although, by his deserting the coalition, and abandoning the common cause, he had lost all right to expect that Great Britain should surrender to him an important acquisition made by

her own arms, yet, with his usual intemperate indulgence of passion, he conceived himself deeply injured by its being withheld, and nourished from that time an implacable resentment against England and her government, the effects of which are afterwards to be traced.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Internal Government of France.—General attachment to the Chief Consul, though the two Factions of Republicans and Royalists are hostile to him.—Plot of the former to remove him by Assassination—Defeated.—Vain hopes of the Royalists, that Napoleon would be the instrument of restoring the Bourbons—Applications to him for that effect disappointed—Royalists methodize the Plot of the Infernal Machine—Description of it—It fails.—Suspicion first falls on the Republicans, and a decree of transportation is passed against a great number of their Chiefs—but is not carried into execution.—The actual Conspirators tried and executed.—Use made by Buonaparte of the Conspiracy to consolidate Despotism.—Various Measures devised for that purpose.—System of the Police.—Fouché—His Skill, Influence, and Power.—Napoleon becomes jealous of him, and organizes measures of precaution against him.—Apprehension entertained by the Chief Consul of the effects of Literature, and his efforts against it.—Persecution of Madame de Staël.—The Concordat—Various Views taken of that Measure.—Plan for a general System of Jurisprudence.—Amnesty granted to the Emigrants.—Plans of Public Education.—Other Plans of Improvement.—Hopes of a General Peace.

WE return to the internal government of France under the Chief Consul.

The events subsequent to the revolution of the 18th Brumaire, seemed to work a miraculous change on the French nation. The superior talents of Napoleon; with the policy exercised by Talleyrand and Fouché, and the other statesmen of ability whom he had called into administration, and who desired at all events to put an end to further revolutionary movements—but, above all, the victory of Marengo, had at once created and attached to the person of the Chief Consul an immense party, which might be said to comprehend all those, who, being neither decided Royalists nor determined Republicans, were indifferent about the form of the government, so they found ease and protection while living under it.

But, on the other hand, the heads of the two factions continued to exist; and, as the power of the First Consul became at once more absolute and more consolidated, it grew doubly hateful and formidable to them. His political existence was a total obstruction to the systems of both parties, and yet one which it was impossible to remove. There was no national council left, in which the authority of the First Consul could be disputed, or his measures impeached. The strength of his military power bid defiance alike to popular commotions, if the Democrats had yet possessed the means of exerting them, and to the scattered bands of the Royalist insurgents. What chance remained for ridding themselves of the autocrat, in whom the Republicans saw a dictator, the Royalists an usurper? None, save that, being mortal, Napoleon was subject to be taken off by assassination.

The Democrats were naturally the first to meditate an enterprise of this nature. The right of taking off a tyrant was, according to their creed, as proper to any private citizen as to those who opposed him armed in the field. The act of Harmodius and Aristogiton—the noble deed of Brutus and his asso-

ciates—were consecrated in history, and esteemed so congenial to the nature of a free constitution, that the Convention, on the motion of Jean de Brie, had at one time determined to raise a legion of assassins, armed with poniards, who should devote themselves to the pious task of exterminating all foreign princes, statesmen, and ministers—in short, all who were accounted the foes of freedom, without pity or distinction. In a party entertaining such principles, there could be no scruple on the score of morality; and where they had been so lately professed by thousands, it seemed natural that, amid the multitude, they must have made a deep impression on some enthusiastic and gloomy disposition, which might be easily provoked to act upon them.

It is no wonder, therefore, that some obscure Jacobins should have early nourished the purpose of assassinating Napoleon, as the enemy of his country's freedom, and the destroyer of her liberties; but it is singular, that most of the conspirators against his person were Italians. Arena, brother of the deputy who was said to have aimed a dagger at Buonaparte in the Council of Five Hundred, was at the head of the conspiracy. He was a Corsican. With him, Ceraschi and Diana, two Italian refugees; a painter, called Topino Lebrun; and two or three enthusiasts of low condition, formed a plot for the purpose of assassinating the Chief Consul at the Opera-house. Their intention was detected by the police; Ceraschi and Diana were arrested behind the scenes, armed, it was said, and prepared for the attempt, and Napoleon was congratulated by most of the constituted authorities upon having escaped a great danger.

Crassous, President of the Tribune, made a singular speech on the occasion, which would almost bear a double interpretation. "There had been so many conspiracies," he said, "at so many different periods, and under so many different pretexts, which had never been followed up either by inquiry or punishment, that a great number of good citizens had become sceptical on the subject of their existence. This incredulity was dangerous," he argued; "it was time it should be ended." With this view, Monsieur Crassous recommended, that the persons guilty on the present occasion should be prosecuted and punished with all the solemnity and rigour of the laws.

Buonaparte replied, with military indifference, that he had been in no real danger. "The contemptible wretches," he said, in something like a renewal of his Egyptian vein, "had no power to commit the crime they meditated. Besides the assistance of the whole audience, I had with me a piquet of my brave guard, from whom the wretches could not have borne a look." So ended this singular discourse; and it is remarkable that neither were the circumstances of the plot made public, nor the conspirators punished, till the more memorable attempt on Napoleon's life by the Royalists.

The Royalists, as a party, had far more interest with Buonaparte than the Democrats. The former approved of the principles and form of his government,—it was only necessary for their conversion, that they should learn to endure his person; whereas the Jacobins being equally averse to the office to which he aspired, to his power, and to himself, there were no hopes of their being brought to tolerate either the monarch or the man. Of the latter, therefore, Napoleon entertained equal dislike and distrust; while, from obvious causes, his feelings towards the former were in some measure friendly.

The Royalists, too, for some time entertained a good opinion of Buonaparte, and conceived that he intended, in his own time and his own way, to act in behalf of the exiled royal family. The enthusiastic of the party were at a loss to conceive that the throne of France should be again erected, and that any one but a Bourbon should dare to ascend it. It seemed to them impossible that the monarchy should revive without the restoration of the legitimate monarch, and they could not believe that a Corsican soldier of fortune would meditate an usurpation, or that France would be for a moment tolerant of his pretensions. The

word liberty had, indeed, misled the people of France for a time, but, that illusion being dissipated, their natural love to the royal race would return like a reviving spring, and again run in its old channel.

So general was the belief among this class, that Buonaparte meditated the restoration of the Bourbons, that several agents of the family made their way so far as to sound his own mind upon the subject. Louis himself, afterwards XVIII., addressed to the First Consul a letter of the following tenor:—"You cannot achieve the happiness of France without my restoration, any more than I can ascend the throne which is my right, without your co-operation. Haste then to complete the good work, which none but you can accomplish, and name the rewards which you claim for your friends."

Buonaparte answered the letter with cold civility. He esteemed the person, he said, and pitied the misfortunes, of his Royal Highness the Comte de Provence, and should be glad to assist him, did an opportunity permit. But as his Royal Highness could not be restored to France, save at the expense of an hundred thousand lives, it was an enterprise in which he, Buonaparte, must decline to aid him.

A less direct, and more artful course, is said to have been attempted, by the mission of the Duchesse de Guiche, one of the most beautiful and pleasing women of the time, who, obtaining permission to come to Paris under pretext of her private affairs, was introduced at the Tuilleries, and delighted Josephine with the elegance of her manners. Napoleon did not escape the fascination, but the instant she touched on the subject of politics, the interesting Duchesse received an order to quit Paris.

As soon as the Royalists discovered, by the failure of these and similar applications, as well as by the gradual tendency of Buonaparte's measures, that the restoration of the Bourbons was the thing farthest from his purpose, their disappointment exasperated them against the audacious individual, whose single person seemed now the only obstacle to that event. Monarchical power was restored, in spirit at least, if not in form; was it to be endured, the more zealous followers of the Bourbons demanded of each other, that it should become the prize of a military usurper? This party, as well as that of the Jacobins, contained doubtless many adherents, whom the enthusiasm of their political principles disposed to serve their cause, even at the expense of great crimes. The sentiments of the princes of the royal family upon such a subject, were becoming their high rank.* They were resolved to combat Buonaparte's pretensions with open force, such as befitted their pretensions as head of the chivalry of France, but to leave to Jacobins the schemes of private assassination. Still there must have been many, among those characters which are found during the miseries and crimes of civil war, who conceived that the assassination of the Chief Consul would be received as good service when accomplished, although it might not be authorized beforehand. Nay, there may have been partizans zealous enough to take the crime and punishment on themselves, without looking farther than the advantage which their party would receive by the action.

A horrible invention, first hatched, it is said, by the Jacobins,† was adopted

* The opinions of the royal family were nobly expressed, in a letter written by the Prince of Condé to the Comte d'Artois, at a later period, 24th January 1802, which will be hereafter quoted at length.

† It is said, in the Memoirs of Fouché, that the infernal machine was the invention originally of a Jacobin named Chevalier, assisted by Veysser, one of the same party; that they even made an experiment of its power, by exploding an engine of the kind behind the Convent de la Salpetriere; that this circumstance drew on them the attention of the police, and that they were arrested. It does not appear by what means the Royalists became privy to the Jacobin plot, nor is the story in all its parts very probable; yet it would seem it must be partly true, since the attempt by means of the infernal machine was at first charged upon the Jacobins, in consequence of Chevalier's being known to have had some scheme in agitation, to be executed by similar means, in the course of the previous year.

by certain Royalists of a low description, remarkable as actors in the wars of the Chouans, of whom the leaders were named Carbon and St Regent. It was a machine consisting of a barrel of gunpowder, placed on a cart to which it was strongly secured, and charged with grape-shot so disposed around the barrel, as to be dispersed in every direction by the explosion. The fire was to be communicated by a slow match. It was the purpose of the conspirators, undeterred by the indiscriminate slaughter which such a discharge must occasion, to place the machine in the street through which the First Consul was to go to the Opera, having contrived that it should explode, exactly as his carriage should pass the spot; and, strange to say, this stratagem, which seemed as uncertain as it was atrocious, was within an hair's-breadth of success.

On the evening of the 10th October 1800, Buonaparte has informed us, that though he himself felt a strong desire to remain at home, his wife and one or two intimate friends insisted that he should go to the Opera. He was slumbering under a canopy when they awakened him. One brought his hat, another his sword. He was in a manner forced into his carriage, where he again slumbered, and was dreaming of the danger which he had escaped in an attempt to pass the river Tagliamento some years before. On a sudden he awakened amidst thunder and flame.

The cart bearing the engine, which was placed in the street St Nicaise, intercepted the progress of the Chief Consul's coach, which passed it with some difficulty. St Regent had fired the match at the appointed instant; but the coachman, who chanced to be somewhat intoxicated, driving unusually fast, the carriage had passed the machine two seconds before the explosion took place; and that almost imperceptible fraction of time was enough to save the life which was aimed at. The explosion was terrible. Two or three houses were greatly damaged—twenty persons killed, and about fifty-three wounded; among the latter was the incendiary St Regent. The report was heard several leagues from Paris. Buonaparte instantly exclaimed to Lannes and Bessieres, who were in the carriage, "We are blown up!" The attendants would have stopped the coach, but with more presence of mind he commanded them to drive on, and arrived in safety at the Opera; his coachman during the whole time never discovering what had happened, but conceiving the Consul had only received a salute of artillery.

A public officer, escaped from such a peril, became an object of yet deeper interest than formerly to the citizens in general; and the reception of the Consul at the Opera, and elsewhere, was more enthusiastic than ever. Relief was ostentatiously distributed amongst the wounded, and the relatives of the slain; and every one, shocked with the wild atrocity of such a reckless plot, became, while they execrated the perpetrators, attached in proportion to the object of their cruelty. A disappointed conspiracy always adds strength to the government against which it is directed; and Buonaparte did not fail to push this advantage to the uttermost.

Notwithstanding that the infernal machine (for so it was not unappropriately termed) had in fact been managed by the hands of Royalists, the first suspicion fell on the Republicans; and Buonaparte took the opportunity, before the public were undeceived on the subject, of dealing that party a blow, from the effects of which they did not recover during his reign. An arbitrary decree of the Senate was asked and readily obtained, for the transportation beyond seas of nearly one hundred and thirty of the chiefs of the broken faction of the Jacobins, among whom were several names which belonged to the celebrated Reign of Terror, and had figured in the rolls of the National Convention. These men were so generally hated, as connected with the atrocious scenes during the reign of Robespierre, that the unpopularity of their characters excused the irregularity of the proceedings against them, and their fate was viewed with complacency by

many, and with indifference by all. In the end, the First Consul became so persuaded of the political insignificance of these relics of Jacobinism, (who, in fact, were as harmless as the fragments of a bomb-shell after its explosion,) that the decree of deportation was never enforced against them; and Felix Lepelletier, Chaudieu, Talot, and their companions, were allowed to live obscurely in France, watched closely by the police, and under the condition that they should not venture to approach Paris.

The actual conspirators were proceeded against with severity. Chevalier and Veycer, Jacobins, said to have constructed the original model of the infernal machine, were tried before a military commission, condemned to be shot, and suffered death accordingly.

Arena, Ceraschi, Le Brun, and Demerville, were tried before the ordinary court of criminal judicature, and condemned by the voice of a jury; although there was little evidence against them, save that of their accomplice Harel, by whom they had been betrayed. They also were executed.

At a later period, Carbon and St Regent, Royalists, the agents in the actual attempt of 10th October, were also tried, condemned, and put to death. Some persons tried for the same offence were acquitted; and justice seems to have been distributed with an impartiality unusual in France since the Revolution.

But Buonaparte did not design that the consequences of these plots should end with the deaths of the wretches engaged in them. It afforded an opportunity not to be neglected to advance his principal object, which was the erection of France into a despotic kingdom, and the possessing himself of uncontrolled power over the lives, properties, thoughts, and opinions, of those who were born his fellow-subjects, and of whom the very meanest but lately boasted himself his equal. He has himself expressed his purpose respecting the Constitution of the year Eight, or Consular Government, in words dictated to General Gourgaud.

“The ideas of Napoleon were fixed; but the aid of time and events were necessary for their realization. The organization of the Consulate had presented nothing in contradiction to them; it taught unanimity, and that was the first step. This point gained, Napoleon was quite indifferent as to the form and denominations of the several constituted bodies. He was a stranger to the Revolution. It was natural that the will of these men, who had followed it through all its phases, should prevail in questions as difficult as they were abstract. The wisest plan was to go on from day to day—by the polar star by which Napoleon meant to guide the Revolution to the haven he desired.”

If there is any thing obscure in this passage, it received but too luminous a commentary from the course of Buonaparte's actions; all of which tend to show that he embraced the Consular government as a mere temporary arrangement, calculated to prepare the minds of the French nation for his ulterior views of ambition, as young colts are ridden with a light bridle until they are taught by degrees to endure the curb and bit, or as water-fowl taken in a decoy are first introduced within a wider circuit of nets, in order to their being gradually brought within that strict enclosure where they are made absolute prisoners. He tells us in plain terms, he let the revolutionary sages take their own way in arranging the constitution; determined, without regarding the rules they laid down on the chart, to steer his course by one fixed point to one desired haven. That polar star was his own selfish interest—that haven was despotic power. What he considered as most for his own interest, he was determined to consider as the government most suited for France also. Perhaps he may have persuaded himself that he was actually serving his country as well as himself; and, indeed, justly considered, he was in both instances equally grievously mistaken.

With the views which he entertained, the Chief Consul regarded the con-

spiracies against his life as affording a pretext for extending his power too favourable to be neglected. These repeated attacks on the Head of the state made it desirable that some mode should be introduced of trying such offences, briefer and more arbitrary than the slow forms required by ordinary jurisprudence. The prompt and speedy justice to be expected from a tribunal freed from the ordinary restraint of formalities and juries, was stated to be more necessary on account of the state of the public roads, infested by bands called *Chauffeurs*, who stopped the public carriages, intercepted the communications of commerce, and became so formidable, that no public coach was permitted to leave Paris without a military guard of at least four soldiers on the roof. This was used as a strong additional reason for constituting a special Court of Judicature.

Buonaparte could be at no loss for models of such an institution. As hero of the Revolution, he had succeeded to the whole arsenal of revolutionary weapons forged in the name of Liberty, to oppress the dearest rights of humanity. He had but to select that which best suited him, and to mould it to the temper of the times. The country which had so long endured the Revolutionary Tribunal, was not likely to wince under any less stern judicature.

The Court which government now proposed to establish, was to consist of eight members thus qualified. 1. The president and two judges of the ordinary criminal tribunal. 2. Three military men, bearing at least the rank of captain. 3. Two citizens, to be suggested by government, who should be selected from such as were by the constitution qualified to act as judges. Thus five out of eight judges were directly named by the government for the occasion. The Court was to decide without jury, without appeal, and without revision of any kind. As a boon to the accused, the Court were to have at least six members present, and there was to be no casting vote; so that the party would have his acquittal, unless six members out of eight, or four members out of six, should unite in finding him guilty; whereas in other courts, a bare majority is sufficient for condemnation.

With this poor boon to public opinion, the special Commission Court was to be the jurisdiction before whom armed insurgents, conspirators, and in general men guilty of crimes against the social compact, were to undergo their trial.

The Counsellor of State, Portalis, laid this plan before the Legislative Body, by whom it was, according to constitutional form, referred to the consideration of the Tribune. It was in this body, the only existing branch of the constitution where was preserved some shadow of popular forms and of free debate, that those who continued to entertain free sentiments could have any opportunity of expressing them. Benjamin Constant, Daunon, Chenier, and others, the gleanings as it were of the liberal party, made an honourable but unavailing defence against this invasion of the constitution, studying at the same time to express their opposition in language and by arguments least likely to give offence to the government. To the honour of the Tribune, which was the frail but sole remaining barrier of liberty, the project had nearly made shipwreck, and was only passed by a small majority of forty-nine over forty-one. In the Legislative Body there was also a strong minority. It seemed as if the friends of liberty, however deprived of direct popular representation, and of all the means of influencing public opinion, were yet determined to maintain an opposition to the First Consul, somewhat on the plan of that of England.

Another law, passed at this time, must have had a cooling effect on the zeal of some of these patriots. It was announced that there were a set of persons, who were to be regarded rather as public enemies than as criminals, and who ought to be provided against rather by anticipating and defeating their schemes than by punishing their offences. These consisted of Republicans, Royalists,

or any others entertaining, or supposed to entertain, opinions inimical to the present state of affairs; and the law now passed entitled the government to treat them as suspected persons, and as such, to banish them from Paris or from France. Thus was the Chief Consul invested with full power over the personal liberty of every person whom he chose to consider as the enemy of his government.

Buonaparte was enabled to avail himself to the uttermost of the powers which he had thus extracted from the Constitutional Bodies, by the frightful agency of the police. This institution may, even in its mildest form, be regarded as a necessary evil; for although, while great cities continue to afford obscure retreats for vice and crime of every description, there must be men, whose profession it is to discover and bring criminals to justice, as while there are vermin in the animal world, there must be kites and carrion-crows to diminish their number; yet, as the excellence of these guardians of the public depends in a great measure on their familiarity with the arts, haunts, and practices of culprits, they cannot be expected to feel the same horror for crimes, or criminals, which is common to other men. On the contrary, they have a sympathy with them of the same kind which hunters entertain for the game which is the object of their pursuit. Besides, as much of their business is carried on by the medium of spies, they must be able to personate the manners and opinions of those whom they detect; and are frequently induced, by their own interest, to direct, encourage, nay, suggest crimes, that they may obtain the reward due for conviction of the offenders.

Applied to state offences, the agency of such persons, though sometimes unavoidable, is yet more frightfully dangerous. Moral delinquencies can be hardly with any probability attributed to worthy or innocent persons; but there is no character so pure, that he who bears it may not be supposed capable of entertaining false and exaggerated opinions in politics, and, as such, become the victim of treachery and delation. In France, a prey to so many factions, the power of the police had become overwhelming; indeed the very existence of the government seemed in some measure dependent upon the accuracy of their intelligence; and for this purpose their numbers had been enlarged, and their discipline perfected, under the administration of the sagacious and crafty Fouché. This remarkable person had been an outrageous Jacobin, and dipped deep in the horrors of the revolutionary government—an adherent of Barras, and a partaker in the venality and peculation which characterized that period. He was, therefore, totally without principle; but his nature was not of that last degree of depravity, which delights in evil for its own sake, and his good sense told him, that an unnecessary crime was a political blunder. The lenity with which he exercised his terrible office, when left in any degree to his own discretion, while it never prevented his implicit execution of Buonaparte's commands, made the abominable system over which he presided to a certain extent endurable; and thus even his good qualities, while they relieved individual suffering, were of disservice to his country, by reconciling her to bondage.

The *haute police*, as it is called by the French, meaning that department which applies to politics and state affairs, had been unaccountably neglected by the ministers of Louis XVI., and was much disorganized by the consequences of the Revolution. The demagogues of the Convention had little need of a regular system of the kind. Every affiliated club of Jacobins supplied them with spies, and with instruments of their pleasure. The Directory stood in a different situation. They had no general party of their own, and maintained their authority, by balancing the Moderates and Democrats against each other. They, therefore, were more dependent upon the police than their predecessors, and they intrusted Fouché with the superintendence. It was then that, destroying, or rather superseding, the separate offices where the agents of the police pretended to a certain independence of acting, he brought

the whole system to concentrate within his own cabinet. By combining the reports of his agents, and of the various individuals with whom under various pretexts he maintained correspondence, the Minister of Police arrived at so accurate a knowledge of the purpose, disposition, adherents, and tools of the different parties in France, that he could anticipate their mode of acting upon all occasions that were likely to occur, knew what measures were likely to be proposed, and by whom they were to be supported; and when any particular accident took place, was able, from his previous general information, to assign it to the real cause, and the true actors.

An unlimited system of espial, and that stretching through society in all its ramifications, was necessary to the perfection of this system, which had not arrived to its utmost height, till Napoleon ascended the throne. Still, before his reign, it existed all through France, controlling the most confidential expressions of opinion on public affairs, and, like some mephitic vapour, stifling the breath though it was invisible to the eye, and, by its mysterious terrors, putting a stop to all discussion of public measures, which was not in the tone of implicit approbation.

The expense of maintaining this establishment was immense; for Fouché comprehended amongst his spies and informers persons, whom no ordinary gratuity would have moved to act such a part. But this expense was provided for by the large sums which the Minister of Police received for the toleration yielded to brothels, gambling-houses, and other places of profligacy, to whom he granted licenses, in consideration of their observing certain regulations. His system of espial was also extended, by the information which was collected in these haunts of debauchery; and thus the vices of the capital were made to support the means by which it was subjected to a despotic government. His auto-biography contains a boast, that the private secretary of the Chief Consul was his pensioner, and that the lavish profusion of Josephine made even her willing to exchange intelligence concerning the Chief Consul's views and plans. Thus was Fouché not only a spy upon the people in behalf of Buonaparte, but a spy also on Buonaparte himself.

Indeed, the power of the director of this terrible enginery was so great, as to excite the suspicion of Napoleon, who endeavoured to counter-balance it by dividing the department of police into four distinct offices. There were established, 1st, The military police of the palace, over which Duroc, the grand master of the household, presided. 2d, The police maintained by the inspector of the gens-d'armes. 3d, That exercised over the city of Paris by the Prefect. 4th, The general police, which still remained under the control of Fouché. Thus, the First Consul received every day four reports of police, and esteemed himself secure of learning, through some one of them, information which the others might have an interest in concealing.

The agents of these different bodies were frequently unknown to each other; and it often happened, that when, in the exercise of their office, they were about to arrest some individual who had incurred suspicion, they found him protected against them, by his connexion with other bureaux of police. The system was, therefore, as complicated as it was oppressive and unjust; but we shall have such frequent opportunity to refer to the subject, that we need here only repeat, that, with reference to his real interest, it was unfortunate for Buonaparte that he found at his disposal so ready a weapon of despotism as the organized police, wielded by a hand so experienced as that of Fouché.

It was the duty of the police to watch the progress of public opinion, whether it was expressed in general society, and confidential communication, or by the medium of the press. Buonaparte entertained a feverish apprehension of the effects of literature on the general mind, and in doing so acknowledged the weak points in his government. The public journals were under the daily and constant superintendence of the police, and their editors were

summoned before Fouché when anything was inserted which could be considered as disrespectful to his authority. Threats and promises were liberally employed on such occasions, and such journalists as proved refractory, were soon made to feel that the former were no vain menaces. The suppression of the offensive newspaper was often accompanied by the banishment or imprisonment of the editor. The same measure was dealt to authors, booksellers, and publishers, respecting whom the jealousy of Buonaparte amounted to a species of disease.

No one can be surprised that an absolute government should be disposed to usurp the total management of the daily press, and such other branches of literature as are immediately connected with politics; but the interference of Buonaparte's police went much farther, and frequently required from those authors who wrote only on general topics, some express recognizance of his authority. The ancient Christians would not attend the theatre, because it was necessary that, previous to enjoying the beauties of the scene, they should sacrifice some grains of incense to the false deity, supposed to preside over the place. In like manner, men of generous minds in France were often obliged to suppress works on subjects the most alien to politics, because they could not easily obtain a road to the public unless they consented to recognize the right of the individual, who had usurped the supreme authority, and extinguished the liberties of his country. The circumstances which subjected Madame de Stael to a long persecution by the police of Buonaparte, may be quoted as originating in this busy desire, of connecting his government with the publications of all persons of genius.

We have been already led to notice, that there existed no cordiality betwixt Buonaparte and the gifted daughter of Neckar. Their characters were far from suited to each other. She had manifestly regarded the First Consul as a subject of close and curious observation, and Buonaparte loved not that any one should make him the subject of minute scrutiny. Madame de Stael was the centre also of a distinguished circle of society in France, several of whom were engaged to support the cause of liberty; and the resolution of a few members of the Tribune, to make some efforts to check the advance of Buonaparte to arbitrary power, was supposed to be taken in her saloon, and under her encouragement. For this she was only banished from Paris. But when she was about to publish her excellent and spirited book on German manners and literature, in which, unhappily, there was no mention of the French nation, or its supreme chief, Madame de Stael's work was seized by the police, and she was favoured with a line from Fouché, acquainting her that the air of France did not suit her health, and inviting her to leave it with all convenient speed. While in exile from Paris, which she accounted her country, the worthy Prefect of Geneva suggested a mode by which she might regain favour. An ode on the birth of the King of Rome, was recommended as the means of conciliation. Madame de Stael answered, she should limit herself to wishing him a good nurse; and became exposed to new rigours, even extending to the friends who ventured to visit her in her exile. So general was the French influence all over Europe, that, to shelter herself from the persecutions by which she was everywhere followed, she was at length obliged to escape to England, by the remote way of Russia. Chenier, author of the Hymn of the Marseilloise, though formerly the panegyrist of General Buonaparte, became, with other literary persons who did not bend low enough to his new dignity, objects of persecution to the First Consul. The childish pertinacity with which Napoleon followed up such unreasonable piques, belongs indeed, chiefly, to the history of the Emperor, but it showed its blossoms earlier. The power of indulging such petty passions, goes, in a great measure, to foster and encourage their progress; and in the case of Buonaparte, this power, great in itself, was

increased by the dangerous facilities which the police offered, for gratifying the spleen, or the revenge, of the offended sovereign.

Another support, of a very different kind, and grounded on the most opposite principles, was afforded to the rising power of Napoleon, through the re-establishment of religion in France, by his treaty with the Pope, called the Concordat. Two great steps had been taken towards this important point, by the edict opening the churches, and renewing the exercise of the Christian religion, and by the restoration of the Pope to his temporal dominions, after the battle of Marengo. The further objects to be attained were the sanction of the First Consul's government by the Pontiff on the one hand, and, on the other, the re-establishment of the rights of the church in France, so far as should be found consistent with the new order of things.

This important treaty was managed by Joseph Buonaparte, who, with three colleagues, held conferences for that purpose with the plenipotentiaries of the Pope. The ratifications were exchanged on the 18th of September 1801; and when they were published, it was singular to behold how submissively the once proud See of Rome lay prostrated before the power of Buonaparte, and how absolutely he must have dictated all the terms of the treaty. Every article innovated on some of those rights and claims, which the Church of Rome had for ages asserted as the unalienable privileges of her infallible head.

I. It was provided, that the Catholic religion should be freely exercised in France, acknowledged as the national faith, and its service openly practised, subject to such regulations of police as the French government should judge necessary. II. The Pope, in concert with the French government, was to make a new division of dioceses, and to require of the existing bishops even the resignation of their sees, should that be found necessary to complete the new arrangement. III. The sees which should become vacant by such resignation, or by deprivation, in case a voluntary abdication was refused, as also all future vacancies, were to be filled up by the Pope, on nominations proceeding from the French government. IV. The new bishops were to take an oath of fidelity to the government, and to observe a ritual, in which there were to be especial forms of prayer for the Consuls. V. The church-livings were to undergo a new division, and the bishops were to nominate to them, but only such persons as should be approved by the government. VI. The government was to make suitable provision for the national clergy, while the Pope expressly renounced all right competent to him and his successors, to challenge or dispute the sales of church property which had been made since the Revolution.

Such was the celebrated compact, by which Pius VII. surrendered to a soldier, whose name was five or six years before unheard of in Europe, those high claims to supremacy in spiritual affairs, which his predecessors had maintained for so many ages against the whole potentates of Europe. A puritan might have said of the Power seated on the Seven Hills—"Babylon is fallen, it is fallen that great city!" The more rigid Catholics were of the same opinion. The Concordat, they alleged, showed rather the abasement of the Roman hierarchy than the re-erection of the Gallic church.

The proceedings against the existing bishops of France, most of whom were of course emigrants, were also but little edifying. Acting upon the article of the Concordat already noticed, and caused, as the letter itself states, "by the exigencies of the times, which exercises its violence even on us," the Pope required of each of these reverend persons, by an especial mandate, to accede to the compact, by surrendering his see, as therein provided. The order was peremptory in its terms, and an answer was demanded within fifteen days. The purpose of this haste was to prevent consultation or combination, and to place before each bishop, individually, the choice of compli-

ance, thereby gaining a right to be provided for in the new hierarchy ; or of refusal, in which case the Pope would be obliged to declare the see vacant, in conformity to his engagement with Buonaparte.

The bishops in general declined compliance with a request, which, on the part of the Pope, was evidently made by compulsion. They offered to lay their resignation at his Holiness's feet, so soon as they should be assured that there was regular canonical provision made for filling up their sees ; but they declined, by any voluntary act of theirs, to give countenance to the surrender of the rights of the church implied in the Concordat, and preferred exile and poverty to any provision which they might obtain, by consenting to compromise the privileges of the hierarchy. These proceedings greatly increased the unpopularity of the Concordat among the more zealous Catholics.

Others of that faith there were, who, though they considered the new system as very imperfect, yet thought it might have the effect of preserving in France some sense of the Christian religion, which, under the total disuse of public worship, stood a chance of being entirely extinguished in the minds of the rising generation. They remembered, that though the Jews in the days of Esdras shed tears of natural sorrow when they beheld the inferiority of the second Temple, yet Providence had sanctioned its erection, under the warrant, and by permission, of an unbelieving task-master. They granted, that the countenance shown by Buonaparte to the religious establishment, was entirely from motives of self-interest ; but still they hoped that God, who works his own will by the selfish passions of individuals, was now using those of the First Consul to recall some sense of religion to France ; and they anticipated that religion, as the best friend of all that is good and graceful in humanity, was likely, in course of time, to bring back and encourage a sense of rational liberty.

The revolutionary part of France beheld the Concordat with very different eyes. The Christian religion was, as to the Jews and Greeks of old, a stumbling-block to the Jacobins, and foolishness to the philosophers. It was a system which they had attacked with a zeal even as eager as that which they had directed against monarchical institutions ; and in the restoration of the altar, they foresaw the re-erection of the throne. Buonaparte defended himself among the philosophers, by comparing his Concordat to a sort of vaccination of religion, which, by introducing a slighter kind into the system of the state, would gradually prepare for its entire extinction.

In the meantime, he proceeded to renew the ancient league betwixt the church and crown, with as much solemnity as possible. Portalis was created Minister of Religion, a new office, for managing the affairs of the church. He had deserved this preferment, by a learned and argumentative speech to the Legislative Body, in which he proved to the French statesmen, (what in other countries is seldom considered as matter of doubt,) that the exercise of religion is congenial to human nature, and worthy of being cherished and protected by the state. The Concordat was inaugurated at Notre Dame with the utmost magnificence. Buonaparte attended in person, with all the badges and pomp of royalty, and in the style resembling as nearly as possible that of the former Kings of France. The Archbishop of Aix was appointed to preach upon the occasion, being the very individual prelate who had delivered the sermon upon the coronation of Louis XVI. Some address, it was said, was employed to procure the attendance of the old Republican Generals. They were invited by Berthier to breakfast, and thence carried to the First Consul's levee : after which it became impossible for them to decline attending him to the Church of Notre Dame. As he returned from the ceremony, surrounded by these military functionaries, Buonaparte remarked with complacency, that the former order of things was fast returning. One of his generals boldly answered,—“ Yes !—all returns—excepting the two millions

of Frenchmen, who have died to procure the proscription of the very system now in the act of being restored."

It is said that Buonaparte, when he found the Pope and the clergy less tractable than he desired, regretted having taken the step of re-establishing religion, and termed the Concordat the greatest error of his reign. But such observations could only escape him in a moment of pique or provocation. He well knew the advantage which a government must derive from a national church, which recognises them in its ritual; and at Saint Helena, he himself at once acknowledged the advantage of his compact with the Pope as a measure of state, and his indifference to it in a religious point of view. "I never regretted the Concordat," he said. "I must have had either that or something equivalent. Had the Pope never before existed, he should have been made for the occasion."

The First Consul took care, accordingly, to make his full advantage of the Concordat, by introducing his own name as much as possible into the catechism of the church, which, in other respects, was that drawn up by Bossuet. To honour Napoleon, the catechumen was taught, was the same as to honour and serve God himself—to oppose his will, was to incur the penalty of eternal damnation.

In civil affairs, Buonaparte equally exerted his talents, in connecting the safety and interests of the nation with his own aggrandizement. He had already laughed at the idea of a free constitution. "The only free constitution necessary," he said, "or useful, was a good civil code;" not considering, or choosing to have it considered, that the best system of laws, when held by no better guarantee than the pleasure of an arbitrary prince and his council of state, is as insecure as the situation of a pearl suspended by a single hair. Let us do justice to Napoleon, however, by acknowledging, that he encountered with manly firmness the gigantic labour of forming a code of institutions, which, supplying the immense variety of provincial laws that existed in the different departments of France, and suppressing the partial and temporary regulations made in the various political crises of the Revolution, were designed to be the basis of a uniform national system. For this purpose, an order of the Consuls convoked Messrs Portalis, Tronchet, Bigot, Preamenu, and Maleville, juriconsults of the highest character, and associated them with the Minister of Justice, Cambaceres, in the task of adjusting and reporting a plan for a general system of jurisprudence. The progress and termination of this great work will be hereafter noticed. The Chief Consul himself took an active part in the deliberations.

An ordinance, eminently well qualified to heal the civil wounds of France, next manifested the talents of Buonaparte, and, as men hoped, his moderation. This was the general amnesty granted to the emigrants. A decree of the senate, 26th April 1801, permitted the return of these unfortunate persons to France, providing they did so, and took the oath of fidelity to government, within a certain period. There were, however, five classes of exceptions, containing such as seemed too deeply and strongly pledged to the house of Bourbon, ever to reconcile themselves to the government of Buonaparte. Such were, 1st, Those who had been chiefs of bodies of armed royalists;—2d, Who had held rank in the armies of the allies;—3d, Who had belonged to the household of the princes of the blood;—4th, Who had been agents or encouragers of foreign or domestic war;—5th, The generals and admirals, together with the representatives of the people, who had been guilty of treason against the Republic, together with the prelates, who declined to resign their sees in terms of the Concordat. It was at the same time declared, that not more than five hundred in all should be excepted from the amnesty. Buonaparte truly judged, that the mass of emigrants, thus winnowed and purified from all who had been leaders, exhausted in fortune, and wearied out by exile, would in general be

grateful for permission to return to France, and passive, nay, contented and attached subjects of his dominion; and the event in a great measure, if not fully, justified his expectations. Such part of their property as had not been sold, was directed to be restored to them; but they were subjected to the special superintendence of the police for the space of ten years after their return.

With similar and most laudable attention to the duties of his high office, Buonaparte founded plans of education, and particularly, with Mongé's assistance, established the Polytechnic school, which has produced so many men of talent. He inquired anxiously into abuses, and was particularly active in correcting those which had crept into the prisons during the Revolution, where great tyranny was exercised by monopoly of provisions, and otherwise. In amending such evils, Buonaparte, though not of kingly birth, showed a mind worthy of the rank to which he had ascended. It is only to be regretted, that in what interfered with his personal wishes or interest, he uniformly failed to manifest the sound and correct views, which on abstract questions he could form so clearly.

Other schemes of a public character were held out as occupying the attention of the Chief Consul. Like Augustus, whose situation his own in some measure resembled, Napoleon endeavoured, by the magnificence of his projects for the improvement of the state, to withdraw attention from his inroads upon public freedom. The inland navigation of Languedoc was to be completed, and a canal, joining the river Yonne to the Saonne, was to connect the south part of the republic so completely with the north, as to establish a communication by water between Marseilles and Amsterdam. Bridges were also to be built, roads to be laid out and improved, museums founded in the principal towns of France, and many other public labours undertaken, on a scale which should put to shame even the boasted days of Louis XIV. Buonaparte knew the French nation well, and was aware that he should best reconcile them to his government, by indulging his own genius for bold and magnificent undertakings, whether of a military or a civil character.

But although these splendid proposals filled the public ear, and flattered the national pride of France, commerce continued to languish, under the effects of a constant blockade, provisions became dear, and discontent against the Consulate began to gain ground over the favourable sentiments which had hailed its commencement. The effectual cure for these heart-burnings was only to be found in a general peace; and a variety of events, some of them of a character very displeasing to the First Consul, seemed gradually preparing for this desirable event.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Return to the external Relations of France.—Her universal Ascendency.—Napoleon's advances to the Emperor Paul.—Plan of destroying the British Power in India.—Right of Search at Sea.—Death of Paul.—Its effects on Buonaparte.—Affairs of Egypt.—Assassination of Kleber.—Menou appointed to succeed him.—British Army lands in Egypt.—Battle and Victory of Alexandria.—Death of Sir Ralph Abercromby.—General Hutchinson succeeds him.—The French General Belliard capitulates—as does Menou.—War in Egypt brought to a victorious Conclusion.

HAVING thus given a glance at the internal affairs of France during the commencement of Buonaparte's domination, we return to her external relations, which, since the peace of Luneville, had assumed the appearance of universal ascendancy, so much had the current of human affairs been altered

by the talents and fortunes of one man. Not only was France in secure possession, by the treaty of Luneville, of territories extending to the banks of the Rhine, but the surrounding nations were, under the plausible names of protection or alliance, as submissive to her government as if they had made integral parts of her dominions. Holland, Switzerland, and Italy, were all in a state of subjection to her will; Spain, like a puppet, moved but at her signal; Austria was broken-spirited and dejected; Prussia still remembered her losses in the first revolutionary war; and Russia, who alone could be considered as unmoved by any fear of France, was yet in a situation to be easily managed, by flattering and cajoling the peculiar temper of the Emperor Paul.

We have already observed, that Buonaparte had artfully availed himself of the misunderstanding between Austria and Russia, to insinuate himself into the good graces of the Czar. The disputes between Russia and England gave him still further advantages over the mind of that incautious monarch.

The refusal of Britain to cede the almost impregnable fortress of Malta, and with it the command of the Mediterranean, to a power who was no longer friendly, was aggravated by her declining to admit Russian prisoners into the cartel of exchange betwixt the French and British. Buonaparte contrived to make his approaches to the Czar in a manner calculated to bear upon both these subjects of grievance. He presented to Paul, who affected to be considered as the Grand Master of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, the sword given by the Pope to the heroic John de la Valette, who was at the head of the Order during the celebrated defence of Malta against the Turks. With the same view of placing his own conduct in a favourable contrast with that of Great Britain, he new-clothed and armed eight or nine thousand Russian prisoners, and dismissed them freely, in token of his personal esteem for the character of the Emperor.

A more secret and scandalous mode of acquiring interest is said to have been attained, through the attachment of the unfortunate Prince to a French actress of talents and beauty, who had been sent from Paris for the express purpose of acquiring his affections. From these concurring reasons, Paul began now openly to manifest himself as the warm friend of France, and the bitter enemy of Britain. In the former capacity, he had the weak and unworthy complaisance to withdraw the hospitality which he had hitherto afforded to the relics of the Royal Family of Bourbon, who were compelled to remove from Mittau, where they had been hitherto permitted to reside.

To gratify his pique against England, Paul gave hearing at least to a magnificent scheme, by which Buonaparte proposed to accomplish the destruction of the British power in India, which he had in vain hoped to assail by the possession of Egypt. The scheme was now to be effected by the union of the French and Russian troops, which were to force their way to British India over land, through the kingdom of Persia; and a plan of such a campaign was seriously in agitation. Thirty-five thousand French were to descend the Danube into the Black Sea; and then, being wafted across that sea and the sea of Azof, were to march by land to the banks of the Wolga. Here they were again to be embarked, and descend the river to Astracan, and from thence were to cross the Caspian Sea to Astrabad, where they were to be joined by a Russian army, equal in force to their own. It was thought that, marching through Persia by Herat, Ferah, and Candahar, the Russo-Gallic army might reach the Indus in forty-five days from Astrabad. This gigantic project would scarce have been formed by any less daring genius than Napoleon; nor could any prince, with a brain less infirm than Paul's, have agreed to become his tool in so extraordinary an undertaking, from which France was to derive all the advantage.

A nearer mode of injuring the interests of England than this overland march to India, was in the power of the Emperor of Russia. A controversy

being in dependence betwixt England and the northern courts, afforded the pretext for throwing his weight into the scale against her at this dangerous crisis.

The right of search at sea, that is, the right of stopping a neutral or friendly vessel, and taking out of her the goods belonging to an enemy, is acknowledged in the earliest maritime codes. But England, by her naval superiority, had been enabled to exert this right so generally, that it became the subject of much heart-burning to neutral powers. The association of the Northern States in 1780, known by the name of the Armed Neutrality, had for its object to put down this right of search, and establish the maxim that free bottoms made free goods; in other words, that the neutral character of the vessel should protect whatever property she might have on board. This principle was now anxiously reclaimed by France, as the most effective argument for the purpose of irritating the neutral powers against Great Britain, whose right of search, which could not be exercised without vexation and inconvenience to their commerce, must necessarily be unpopular amongst them. Forgetting that the danger occasioned by the gigantic power of France was infinitely greater than any which could arise from the maritime claims of England, the northern courts became again united on the subject of what they termed the freedom of the seas. Indeed, the Emperor Paul, even before the offence arising out of his disappointment respecting Malta, had proceeded so far as to sequester all British property in his dominions, in resentment of her exercising the right of search. But upon the fresh provocation which he conceived himself to have received, the Emperor became outrageous, and took the most violent measures for seizing the persons and property of the English, that ever were practised by an angry and unreasonable despot.

Prussia, more intent on her own immediate aggrandizement, than mindful of the welfare of Europe in general, took advantage of the universal ill-will against England, to seize upon the King's continental dominions of Hanover, with peculiar breach of public faith, as she herself had guaranteed the neutrality of that country.

The consequences, with regard to the northern powers, are well known. The promptitude of the administration sent a strong fleet to the Baltic; and the well-contested battle of Copenhagen detached Denmark from the Northern Confederacy. Sweden had joined it unwillingly; and Russia altered her course of policy in consequence of the death of Paul. That unhappy prince had surmounted the patience of his subjects, and fell a victim to one of those conspiracies, which in arbitrary monarchies, especially such as partake of the oriental character, supply all the checks of a moderate and free constitution, where the prerogative of the crown is limited by laws. In these altered circumstances, the cause of dispute was easily removed, by the right of search being subjected to equitable regulations and modifications.

Buonaparte received the news of Paul's death with much more emotion than he was usually apt to testify. It is said, that, for the first time in his life, a passionate exclamation of "*Mon Dieu!*" escaped him in a tone of sorrow and surprise. With Paul's immense power, and his disposition to place it at the disposal of France, the First Consul doubtless reckoned upon the accomplishment of many important plans which his death disconcerted. It was natural, also, that Napoleon should be moved by the sudden and violent end of a prince, who had manifested so much admiration of his person and his qualities. He is said to have dwelt so long on the strangeness of the incident, that Talleyrand was obliged to remind him, that it was a mode of changing a chief magistrate, or a course of administration, which was common to the empire in which it took place.*

* "*Mais enfin que voulez vous? C'est un mode de destitution, propre à ce pays-là!*"

The death of Paul, so much regretted by Buonaparte, was nevertheless the means of accelerating a peace between France and Great Britain, which, if it could have been established on a secure basis, would have afforded him the best chance of maintaining his power, and transmitting it to his posterity. While the Czar continued to be his observant ally, there was little prospect that the First Consul would be moderate enough in the terms which he might have proffered, to permit the British ministry to treat with him.

Another obstacle to peace was at this time removed, in a manner not more acceptable to Buonaparte than was the death of the Emperor Paul. The possession of Egypt by the French was a point which the First Consul would have insisted upon from strong personal feeling. The Egyptian expedition was intimately connected with his own personal glory, nor was it likely that he would have sacrificed its results to his desire of peace with Great Britain. On the other hand, there was no probability that England would accede to any arrangement, which should sanction the existence of a French colony, settled in Egypt with the express purpose of destroying our Indian commerce. But this obstacle to peace was removed by the fate of arms.

Affairs in Egypt had been on the whole unfavourable to the French, since that army had lost the presence of the commander-in-chief. Kleber, on whom the command devolved, was discontented both at the unceremonious and sudden manner in which the duty had been imposed upon him, and with the scarcity of means left to support his defence. Perceiving himself threatened by a large Turkish force, which was collecting for the purpose of avenging the defeat of the vizier at Aboukir, he became desirous of giving up a settlement which he despaired of maintaining. He signed accordingly a convention with the Turkish plenipotentiaries, and Sir Sidney Smith, on the part of the British, by which it was provided that the French should evacuate Egypt, and that Kleber and his army should be transported to France in safety, without being molested by the British fleet. When the British government received advice of this convention, they refused to ratify it, on the ground that Sir Sidney Smith had exceeded his powers in entering into it. The Earl of Elgin having been sent out as plenipotentiary to the Porte, it was asserted that Sir Sidney's ministerial powers were superseded by his appointment. Such was the alleged informality on which the treaty fell to the ground; but the truth was, that the arrival of Kleber and his army in the south of France, at the very moment when the successes of Suwarrow gave strong hopes of making some impression on her frontier, might have had a most material effect upon the events of the war. Lord Keith, therefore, who commanded in the Mediterranean, received orders not to permit the passage of the French Egyptian army, and the treaty of El Arish was in consequence broken off.

Kleber, disappointed of this mode of extricating himself, had recourse to arms. The Vizier Jouseff Pacha, having crossed the desert, and entered Egypt, received a bloody and decisive defeat from the French general, near the ruins of the ancient city of Heliopolis, on the 18th of March 1800. The measures which Kleber adopted after this victory were well calculated to maintain the possession of the country, and reconcile the inhabitants to the French government. He was as moderate in the imposts as the exigencies of his army permitted, greatly improved the condition of the troops, and made, if not peace, at least an effectual truce with the restless and enterprising Murad Bey, who still continued to be at the head of a considerable body of Mamelukes. Kleber also raised among the Greeks a legion of fifteen hundred or two thousand men; and with more difficulty succeeded in levying a regiment of Copts.

While busied in these measures, he was cut short by the blow of an assassin. A fanatic Turk, called Soliman Haleby, a native of Aleppo, imagined he was inspired by Heaven to slay the enemy of the Prophet and the Grand Seignior

He concealed himself in a cistern, and springing out on Kleber when there was only one man in company with him, stabbed him dead. The assassin was justly condemned to die by a military tribunal; but the sentence was executed with a barbarity which disgraced those who practised it. Being impaled alive, he survived for four hours in the utmost tortures, which he bore with an indifference which his fanaticism perhaps alone could have bestowed.

The Baron Menou, on whom the command now devolved, was an inferior person to Kleber. He had made some figure amongst the nobles who followed the revolutionary cause in the Constituent Assembly, and was the same general whose want of decision at the affair of the Sections had led to the employment of Buonaparte in his room, and to the first rise, consequently, of the fortunes which had since swelled so high. Menou altered for the worse several of the regulations of Kleber, and, carrying into literal execution what Buonaparte had only written and spoken of, he became an actual Mahomedan, married a native Turkish woman, and assumed the name of Abdallah Menou. This change of religion exposed him to the ridicule of the French, while it went in no degree to conciliate the Egyptians.

The succours from France, which Buonaparte had promised in his farewell address to the Egyptian army, arrived slowly, and in small numbers and quantity. This was not the fault of the Chief Consul, who had commanded Gantheaume to put to sea with a squadron, having on board four or five thousand men; but being pursued by the English fleet, that admiral was glad to regain the harbour of Toulon. Other efforts were made with the same indifferent success. The French ports were too closely watched to permit the sailing of any expedition on a large scale, and two frigates, with five or six hundred men, were the only reinforcements that reached Egypt.

Meantime, the English cabinet had adopted the daring and manly resolution of wresting from France this favourite colony by force. They had for a length of time confined their military efforts to partial and detached objects, which, if successful, could not have any effect on the general results of the war, and which, when they miscarried, as was the case before Cadiz, Ferrol, and elsewhere, tended to throw ridicule on the plans of the ministry, and, however undeservedly, even upon the character of the forces employed on the service. It was by such ill-considered and imperfect efforts that the war was maintained on our part, while our watchful and formidable enemy combined his mighty means to effect objects of commensurate importance. We, like puny fencers, offered doubtful and uncertain blows, which could only affect the extremities; he never aimed, save at the heart, nor thrust, but with the determined purpose of plunging his weapon to the hilt.

The consequence of these partial and imperfect measures was, that even while our soldiers were in the act of gradually attaining that perfection of discipline by which they are now distinguished, they ranked—most unjustly—lower in the respect of their countrymen, than at any other period in our history. The pre-eminent excellence of our sailors had been shown in a thousand actions; and it became too usual to place it in contrast with the failure of our expeditions on shore. But it was afterwards found that our soldiers could assume the same superiority, whenever the plan of the campaign offered them a fair field for its exercise. Such a field of action was afforded by the Egyptian expedition.

This undertaking was the exclusive plan of an ill-requited statesman, the late Lord Melville; who had difficulty in obtaining even Mr Pitt's concurrence in a scheme, of a character so much more daring than Britain had lately entertained. The expedition was resolved upon by the narrowest possible majority in the cabinet; and his late Majesty interposed his consent in terms inferring a solemn protest against the risk about to be incurred. "It is with the utmost reluctance," (such, or nearly such, were the words of George III.,) "that I

consent to a measure, which sends the flower of my army upon a dangerous expedition against a distant province."* The event, however, showed, that in arduous circumstances, the daring game, if previously well considered, is often the most successful.

On the 13th of March 1801, General Sir Ralph Abercrombie, at the head of an army of seventeen thousand men, landed in Egypt, in despite of the most desperate opposition by the enemy. The excellence of the troops was displayed by the extreme gallantry and calmness with which, landing through a heavy surf, they instantly formed and advanced against the enemy. On the 21st of March, a general action took place. The French cavalry attempted to turn the British flank, and made a desperate charge for that purpose, but failed in their attempt, and were driven back with great loss. The French were defeated, and compelled to retreat on Alexandria, under the walls of which they hoped to maintain themselves. But the British suffered an irreparable loss in their lamented commander, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was mortally wounded in the course of this action. In this gallant veteran his country long regretted one of the best generals, and one of the worthiest and most amiable men, to whom she ever gave birth.

The command descended on General Hutchinson, who was soon joined by the Capitan Pacha, with a Turkish army. The recollections of Aboukir and Heliopolis, joined to the remonstrances and counsels of their English allies, induced the Turks to avoid a general action, and confine themselves to skirmishes, by which system the French were so closely watched, and their communications so effectually destroyed, that General Belliard, shut up in a fortified camp in Cairo, cut off from Alexandria, and threatened with insurrection within the place, was compelled to capitulate, under condition that his troops should safely be transported to France, with their arms and baggage. This was on the 28th of June, and the convention had scarce been signed, when the English army was reinforced in a manner which showed the bold and successful combination of measures under which the expedition had been undertaken.

An army of seven thousand men, of whom two thousand were sepoy, or native Indian troops, were disembarked at Cossier, on the Red Sea, and, detached from the Indian settlements, now came to support the European part of the English invasion. The Egyptians saw with the extremity of wonder, native troops, many of them Moslemah, who worshipped in the mosques, and observed the ritual enjoined by the Prophet, perfectly accomplished in the European discipline. The lower class were inclined to think, that this singular reinforcement had been sent to them in consequence of Mahommed's direct and miraculous interposition; only their being commanded by English officers did not favour this theory.

In consequence of these reinforcements, and his own confined situation under the walls of Alexandria, Menou saw himself constrained to enter into a convention for surrendering up the province of Egypt. He was admitted to the same terms of composition which had been granted to Belliard; and thus the war in that quarter was, on the part of Great Britain, triumphantly concluded.

The conquest of this disputed kingdom, excited a strong sensation both in France and Britain; but the news of the contest being finally closed by Menou's submission, are believed to have reached the former country some time

* At an after period, the good King made the following acknowledgment of his mistake. When Lord Melville was out of power, his Majesty did him the honour to visit him at Wimbledon, and partake of some refreshment. On that occasion the King took an opportunity to fill a glass of wine, and having made the company do the same, he gave as his toast, "The health of the courageous minister, who, against the opinion of many of his colleagues, and even the remonstrances of his King, had dared to conceive and carry through the Egyptian expedition."

before the English received them. Buonaparte, on learning the tidings, is reported to have said, "Well, there remains now no alternative but to make the descent on Britain." But it seems to have occurred to him presently afterwards, that the loss of this disputed province might, instead of being an argument for carrying the war to extremity, be considered as the removal of an obstacle to a treaty of peace.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Preparations made for the Invasion of Britain.—Nelson put in command of the Sea.—Attack of the Boulogne Flotilla.—Pitt leaves the Ministry—succeeded by Mr. Addington.—Negociations for Peace.—Just punishment of England, in regard to the conquered Settlements of the Enemy.—Forced to restore them all, save Ceylon and Trinidad.—Malta is placed under the guarantee of a Neutral Power.—Preliminaries of Peace signed.—Joy of the English Populace, and doubts of the better classes.—Treaty of Amiens signed.—The ambitious projects of Napoleon, nevertheless, proceed without interruption.—Extension of his power in Italy.—He is appointed Consul for life, with the power of naming his Successor.—His Situation at the close of the Volume.

As the words of the First Consul appeared to intimate, preparations were resumed on the French coast for the invasion of Great Britain. Boulogne, and every harbour along the coast, was crowded with flat-bottomed boats, and the shores covered with camps of the men designed apparently to fill them. We need not at present dwell on the preparations for attack, or those which the English adopted in defence, as we shall have occasion to notice both, when Buonaparte, for the last time, threatened England with the same measure. It is enough to say, that, on the present occasion, the menaces of France had their usual effect in awakening the spirit of Britain.

The most extensive arrangements were made for the reception of the invaders should they chance to land, and in the meanwhile, our natural barrier was not neglected. The naval preparations were very great, and what gave yet more confidence than the number of vessels and guns, Nelson was put into command of the sea, from Orfordness to Beachy-head. Under his management, it soon became the question, not whether the French flotilla was to invade the British shores, but whether it was to remain in safety in the French harbours. Boulogne was bombarded, and some of the small craft and gun-boats destroyed—the English admiral generously sparing the town; and not satisfied with this partial success, Nelson prepared to attack them with the boats of the squadron. The French resorted to the most unusual and formidable preparations for defence. Their flotilla was moored close to the shore in the mouth of Boulogne harbour, the vessels secured to each other by chains, and filled with soldiers. The British attack in some degree failed, owing to the several divisions of boats missing each other in the dark; some French vessels were taken, but they could not be brought off; and the French chose to consider this result as a victory, on their part, of consequence enough to balance the loss at Aboukir;—though it amounted at best to ascertaining, that although their vessels could not keep the sea, they might, in some comparative degree of safety, lie under close cover of their own batteries. Meantime, the changes which had taken place in the British administration, were preparing public expectation for that peace which all the world now longed for.

Mr Pitt, as is well known, left the ministry, and was succeeded in the

office of first Minister of State by Mr Addington, now Lord Sidmouth. The change was justly considered as friendly to pacific measures; for, in France especially, the gold of Pitt had been by habit associated with all that was prejudicial to their country. The very massacres of Paris, nay, the return of Buonaparte from Egypt, were imputed to the intrigues of the English minister; he was the scape-goat on whom were charged as the ultimate cause, all the follies, crimes, and misfortunes of the Revolution.

A great part of his own countrymen, as well as of the French, entertained a doubt of the possibility of concluding a peace under Mr Pitt's auspices; while those who were most anti-Gallican in their opinions, had little wish to see his lofty spirit stoop to the task of arranging conditions of treaty on terms so different from what his hopes had once dictated. The worth, temper, and talents of his successor, seemed to qualify him to enter into a negotiation, to which the greater part of the nation was now inclined, were it but for the sake of experiment.

Buonaparte himself was at this time disposed to peace. It was necessary to France, and no less necessary to him, since he otherwise must remain pledged to undertake the hazardous alternative of invasion, in which chances stood incalculably against his success; while a failure might have, in its consequences, inferred the total ruin of his power. All parties were, therefore, in a great degree inclined to treat with sincerity; and Buonaparte was with little difficulty brought to consent to the evacuation of Egypt, there being every reason to believe that he was already possessed of the news of the convention with Menou. At any rate, the French cause in Egypt had been almost desperate ever since the battle of Alexandria, and the First Consul was conscious that in this sacrifice he only resigned that, which there was little chance of his being able to keep. It was also stipulated that the French should evacuate Rome and Naples; a condition of little consequence, as they were always able to re-occupy these countries when their interest required it. The Dutch colony of the Cape of Good Hope was to be restored to the Batavian republic, and declared a free port.

In respect of the settlements which the British arms had conquered, England underwent a punishment not unmerited. The conquest of the enemies' colonies had been greatly too much an object of the English ministry; and thus the national force had been frittered away upon acquisitions of comparatively petty importance, which, from the insalubrity of the climate, cost us more men to maintain them than would have been swept off by many a bloody battle. All the conquests made on this peddling plan of warfare, were now to be returned without any equivalent. Had the gallant soldiers, who perished miserably for the sake of these sugar-islands, been united in one well-concerted expedition, to the support of Charette, or La Rochejacquelein, such a force might have enabled these chiefs to march to Paris; or, if sent to Holland, might have replaced the Stadtholder in his dominions. And now, these very sugar-islands, the pitiful compensation which Britain had received for the blood of her brave children, were to be restored to those from whom they had been wrested. The important possessions of Ceylon in the East, and Trinidad in the West Indies, were the only part of her conquests which England retained. The integrity of her ancient ally, Portugal, was, however, recognized, and the independence of the Ionian Islands was stipulated for and guaranteed. Britain restored Porto Ferrajo, and what other places she had occupied in the isle of Elba, or on the Italian coast; but the occupation of Malta for some time threatened to prove an obstacle to the treaty. The English considered it as of the last consequence that this strong island should remain in their possession, and intimated that they regarded the pertinacious resistance which the First Consul testified to this proposal, as implying a private and unavowed desire of renewing, at some future opportunity, his designs on Egypt, to

which Malta might be considered as in some measure a key. After much discussion, it was at length agreed that the independence of the island should be secured by its being garrisoned by a neutral power, and placed under its guarantee and protection.

The preliminaries of peace were signed 10th October 1801. General Law de Lauriston, the school companion and first aid-de-camp of Buonaparte, brought them over from Paris to London, where they were received with the most extravagant joy by the populace, to whom novelty is a sufficient recommendation of almost anything. But amidst the better classes, the sensation was much divided. There was a small but energetic party, led by the celebrated Windham, who, adopting the principles of Burke to their utmost extent, considered the act of treating with a regicide government as indelible meanness, and as a dereliction, on the part of Great Britain, of those principles of legitimacy, upon which the social compact ought to rest. More moderate anti-Gallicans, while they regretted that our efforts in favour of the Bourbons had been totally unavailing, contended with reason, that we were not so closely leagued to their cause as to be bound to sacrifice our own country, in a vain attempt to restore the exiled family to the throne of France. This was the opinion entertained by Pitt himself, and the most judicious among his followers. Lastly, there was the professed Opposition, who, while rejoicing that we had been able to obtain peace on any terms, might now exult in the fulfilment of their predictions of the bad success of the war. Sheridan summed up what was perhaps the most general feeling in the country, with the observation, that "it was a peace which all men were glad of, and no man could be proud of."

Amiens was appointed for the meeting of commissioners, who were finally to adjust the treaty of pacification, which was not ended till five months after the preliminaries had been agreed on. After this long negotiation, the treaty was at length signed, 27th March 1802. The isle of Malta, according to this agreement, was to be occupied by a garrison of Neapolitan troops, while, besides Britain and France, Austria, Spain, Russia, and Prussia, were to guarantee its neutrality. The Knights of St John were to be the sovereigns, but neither French nor English were in future to be members of that order. The harbours were to be free to the commerce of all nations, and the Order was to be neutral towards all nations save the Algerines and other piratical states.

Napoleon, had he chosen to examine into the feelings of the English, must have seen plainly that this treaty, unwillingly acceded to by them, and only by way of experiment, was to have a duration long or short, in proportion to their confidence in, or doubt of, his own good faith. His ambition, and the little scruple which he showed in gratifying it, was, he must have been sensible, the terror of Europe; and until the fears he had excited were disarmed by a tract of peaceful and moderate conduct on his part, the suspicions of England must have been constantly awake, and the peace between the nations must have been considered as precarious as an armed truce. Yet these considerations could not induce him to lay aside, or even postpone, a train of measures, tending directly to his own personal aggrandizement, and confirming the jealousies which his character already inspired. These measures were partly of a nature adapted to consolidate and prolong his own power in France; partly to extend the predominating influence of that country over her continental neighbours.

By the treaty of Luneville, and by that of Tolentino, the independent existence of the Cisalpine and Helvetian republics had been expressly stipulated; but this independence, according to Buonaparte's explanation of the word, did not exclude their being reduced to mere satellites, who depended on, and whose motions were to be regulated by France, and by himself, the chief

governor of France and all her dependencies. When, therefore, the Directory was overthrown in France, it was not his purpose that a directorial form of government should continue to subsist in Italy. Measures were on this account to be taken, to establish in that country something resembling the new Consular model adopted in Paris.

For this purpose, in the beginning of January 1802, a convention of 450 deputies from the Cisalpine States arrived at Lyons, (for they were not trusted to deliberate within the limits of their own country,) to contrive for themselves a new political system. In that period, when the modelling of constitutions was so common, there was no difficulty in drawing up one; which consisted of a president, a deputy-president, a legislative council, and three electoral colleges, composed, 1st, of proprietors, 2d, of persons of learning, and, 3d, of commercial persons. If the Italians had been awkward upon the occasion, they had the assistance of Talleyrand; and soon after, the arrival of Buonaparte himself at Lyons gave countenance to their operations. His presence was necessary for the exhibition of a most singular farce.

A committee of thirty of the Italian convention, to whom had been intrusted the principal duty of suggesting the new model of government, gave in a report, in which it was stated, that, from the want of any man of sufficient influence amongst themselves to fill the office of president, upon whom devolved all the executive duties of the state, the new system could not be considered as secure, unless Buonaparte should be prevailed upon to fill that situation, not, as it was carefully explained, in his character of head of the French government, but in his individual capacity. Napoleon graciously inclined to their suit. He informed them, that he concurred in the modest opinion they had formed, that their republic did not at present possess an individual sufficiently gifted with talents and impartiality to take charge of their affairs, which he should, therefore, retain under his own chief management, while circumstances required him to do so.

Having thus established his power in Italy as firmly as in France, Buonaparte proceeded to take measures for extending his dominions in the former country and elsewhere. By a treaty with Spain, now made public, it appeared that the Duchy of Parma was to devolve on France, together with the island of Elba, upon the death of the present Duke,—an event at no distant date to be expected. The Spanish part of the province of Louisiana, in North America, was to be ceded to France by the same treaty. Portugal, too, though the integrity of her dominions had been guaranteed by the preliminaries of the peace with England, had been induced, by a treaty kept studiously private from the British court, to cede her province of Guiana to France. These stipulations served to show, that there was no quarter of the world in which France and her present ruler did not entertain views of aggrandizement, and that questions of national faith would not be considered too curiously when they interfered with their purpose.

While Europe was stunned and astonished at the spirit of conquest and accumulation manifested by this insatiable conqueror, France was made aware that he was equally desirous to consolidate and to prolong his power, as to extend it over near and distant regions. He was all, and more than all, that sovereign had ever been; but he still wanted the title and the permanence which royalty requires. To attain these was no difficult matter, when the First Consul was the prime mover of each act, whether in the Senate or Tribunal; nor was he long of discovering proper agents eager to gratify his wishes.

Chabot de L'Allier took the lead in the race of adulation. Arising in the Tribunal, he pronounced a long eulogium on Buonaparte, enhancing the gratitude due to the hero, by whom France had been preserved and restored to victory. He, therefore, proposed, that the Tribunal should transmit to the Conservative Senate a resolution, requesting the Senate to consider the

manner of bestowing on Napoleon Buonaparte a splendid mark of the national gratitude.

There was no misunderstanding this hint. The motion was unanimously adopted, and transmitted to the Convention, to the Senate, to the Legislative Body, and to the Consuls.

The Senate conceived they should best meet the demand now made upon them, by electing Napoleon First Consul for a second space of ten years, to commence when the date of the original period, for which he was named by the Constitution, should expire.

The proposition of the Senate being reduced into the form of a decree, was intimated to Buonaparte, but fell short of his wishes; as it assigned to him, however distant it was, a period at which he must be removed from authority. It is true, that the space of seventeen years, to which the edict of the Senate proposed to extend his power, seemed to guarantee a very ample duration; and in point of fact, before the term of its expiry arrived, he was prisoner at Saint Helena. But still there was a termination, and that was enough to mortify his ambition.

He thanked the Senate, therefore, for this fresh mark of their confidence, but eluded accepting it in express terms, by referring to the pleasure of the people. Their suffrages, he said, had invested him with power, and he could not think it right to accept of the prolongation of that power but by their consent. It might have been thought that there was now nothing left but to present the decree of the Senate to the people. But the Second and Third Consuls, Buonaparte's colleagues at a humble distance, took it upon them, though the constitution gave them no warrant for such a manœuvre, to alter the question of the Senate, and to propose to the people one more acceptable to Buonaparte's ambition, requesting their judgment, whether the Chief Consul should retain his office, not for ten years longer, but for the term of his life. By this juggling, the proposal of the Senate was set aside, and that assembly soon found it wisest to adopt the more liberal views suggested by the Consuls, to whom they returned thanks, for having taught them (we suppose) how to appreciate a hint.

The question was sent down to the departments. The registers were opened with great form, as if the people had really some constitutional right to exercise. As the subscriptions were received at the offices of the various functionaries of government, it is no wonder, considering the nature of the question, that the ministers with whom the registers were finally deposited, were enabled to report a majority of three millions of citizens who gave votes in the affirmative. It was much more surprising, that there should have been an actual minority of a few hundred determined Republicans, with Carnot at their head, who answered the question in the negative. This statesman observed, as he signed his vote, that he was subscribing his sentence of deportation; from which we may conjecture his opinion concerning the fairness of this mode of consulting the people. He was mistaken notwithstanding. Buonaparte found himself so strong, that he could afford to be merciful, and to assume a show of impartiality, by suffering those to go unpunished who had declined to vote for the increase of his power.

He did not, however, venture to propose to the people another innovation, which extended beyond his death the power which their liberal gift had continued during his life. A simple decree of the Senate assigned to Buonaparte the right of nominating his successor, by a testamentary deed. So that Napoleon might call his children or relatives to the succession of the empire of France, as to a private inheritance; or, like Alexander, he might leave it to the most favoured of his lieutenant-generals. To such a pass had the domination of a military chief, for the space of betwixt two and three years, reduced the fierce democracy and stubborn loyalty of the two factions, which seemed

before that period to combat for the possession of France. Napoleon had stooped on them both, like the hawk in the fable.

The period at which we close the volume was a most important one in Napoleon's life, and seemed a crisis on which his fate, and that of France, depended. Britain, his most inveterate and most successful enemy, had seen herself compelled by circumstances to resort to the experiment of a doubtful peace, rather than continue a war which seemed to be waged without an object. The severe checks to national prosperity, which arose from the ruined commerce and blockaded ports of France, might now, under the countenance of the First Consul, be exchanged for the wealth that waits upon trade and manufactures. Her navy, of which few vestiges were left save the Brest fleet, might now be recruited, and resume by degrees that acquaintance with the ocean from which they had long been debarred. The restored colonies of France might have added to the sources of her national wealth, and she might have possessed—what Buonaparte on a remarkable occasion declared to be the principal objects he desired for her—ships, colonies, and commerce.

In his personal capacity, the First Consul possessed all the power which he desired, and a great deal more than, whether his own or the country's welfare was regarded, he ought to have wished for. His victories over the foes of France had, by their mere fame, enabled him to make himself master of her freedom. It remained to show—not whether Napoleon was a patriot, for to that honourable name he had forfeited all title when he first usurped unlimited power—but whether he was to use the power which he had wrongfully acquired, like Trajan or like Domitian. His strangely-mingled character showed traits of both these historical portraits, strongly opposed as they are to each other. Or rather, he might seem to be like Socrates in the allegory, alternately influenced by a good and a malevolent demon; the former marking his course with actions of splendour and dignity; while the latter, mastering human frailty by means of its prevailing foible, the love of self, debased the history of a hero, by actions and sentiments worthy only of a vulgar tyrant.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

